



No. 465.—VOL. XXXVI.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1901.

SIXPENCE.



"A RIGHT MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL 'SKETCH' READERS!"

A PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDY BY ALFRED ELLIS AND WALERY, PARKER STREET, W.

THE CLUBMAN.

A Merry Christmas!—An Honour for Sir Robert Hart—Lord Kitchener's Success—The Courage of Admiral Schley—Amateur Theatrical Clubs.

"A MERRY CHRISTMAS" is the wish in every mouth to-day, and, indeed, the clouds on the horizon do seem at last to be breaking. This winter the great Christian festival will be kept in happier circumstances than has been the case for the past two years, and we may look forward with some confidence to a bright and prosperous New Year. The long and weary War, which has drained so much of our best blood, and the taxation for which, though borne uncomplainingly, weighs very heavily on the shoulders of the great mass of the middle classes, the backbone of England, seems at last to be drawing to a close honourable to our arms, a reward for our steadfastness and sacrifices and the valour of our troops. The Coronation and all its attendant pageants and ceremonies will set gold running through a thousand channels, and will benefit a hundred professions and trades, while from Capel Court come the glad signs that are the forerunners of a "boom," and when the stocks rise in the City there is feasting West of the Temple, and the hearts of the milliners and jewellers grow glad, for husbands and fathers are liberal when their bank pass-books become once again pleasant literature.

An honour has been done to a great Englishman in the appointment of Sir Robert Hart to be Junior Guardian of the Heir-Apparent to the Chinese Throne. This is a purely honorary post, but its bestowal shows that the Dowager-Empress and her Court understand how successfully Sir Robert has carried out his difficult duties as a high official in the Chinese service and at the same time a patriotic Briton. Sir Robert Hart's management of the Imperial Maritime Customs has given China one source of income the proceeds of which do not dwindle by passage through innumerable sticky fingers before they reach the Treasury, and he has often told his fellow-countrymen plain truths on moot questions, looking at them through Chinese spectacles—truths which have not been altogether acceptable at the time. He might have been British Ambassador to the Chinese Court had he willed, but declined the honour. He is a Mandarin of the Red Button, the Double Dragon, and the Peacock's-feather.

As the year dips to its close, the star of Lord Kitchener seems to be shining more brightly than that of any of our other public men. Never has there been a great British General who has prepared victory with the same invincible patience that he does. As the capture of Khartoum was the seal set on years of quiet perseverance in North Africa, so will the peace which is now not far off in South Africa be the crown of the many months during which the hard, quiet man has sat in Pretoria working out his plan, sometimes with instruments that have failed, sometimes with luck against him, but very gradually cornering commando after commando, reducing the space little by little in which each guerilla leader can move, and, at last, pushing each Commandant and his force up against a line of blockhouses which tear to pieces any commando trying to thrust a way through. The word "bag," used in a careless moment by the Staff Officer who wrote one of Lord Kitchener's telegrams giving the numbers of captures during a week, has been criticised as being slangy and in bad taste; but there is a marked likeness between the strategy of Lord Kitchener in South Africa and the tactics of the head gamekeeper at a great pheasant "shoot." The ground to be shot over is divided into several parts, and each day the birds are driven into a corner of the wood or a clump of trees surrounded on three sides by nets and "stops," with the only space for escape dotted with the "guns" and the loaders of the shooting-party. Some of the bolder birds may "break back" before they are driven into the trap, but the battue comes sooner or later. In South Africa, the seventy mobile columns are the "guns," the blockhouses are the "stops," and the wire entanglements the nets. If Mr. Kruger and his advisers are wise men, they will call for peace before the last net is drawn into position, the last "stop" placed.

Since the days when poor Admiral Byng was shot "pour encourager les autres," there has never been an inquiry into the conduct of an Admiral which has aroused so much interest as that affecting Rear-Admiral Schley and his strategy and tactics during the naval operations off Santiago in the Spanish-American War. An attack on the retired Admiral, in which, amongst other charges, the word "coward" was used, caused Admiral Schley to demand a Court of Inquiry into his conduct and his strategy. Two of the Admirals who composed the Court criticise unfavourably his movements when in command, the third, Admiral Dewey, differing from them in this matter; but the Court unanimously finds that "his conduct during the battle of July 3 exhibited self-possession and courage. In his own person he encouraged his subordinate officers and men to fight courageously." His personal courage declared above suspicion, Admiral Schley has determined to do no more than file with the American Secretary to the Navy his answer to the other matters in the report. This conduct, which sailors of all nationalities will approve of, has not stilled the newspaper controversy, which still rages fiercely round the battle of July 3 and the celebrated loop described by the *Brooklyn*.

The various Amateur Theatrical Clubs are beginning their winter season. I hear that the Windsor Strollers gave an admirable performance of "Brother Officers" at Windsor, and the Strolling Players performed "His Excellency the Governor" very cleverly at St. George's Hall.

THE MAN IN THE STREET.

A Merry Christmas to You All!—The Beauties of a Holiday—And its Drawbacks—Good Old "Adelphi"—The Glittering Shops—Red Envelopes—The Gulls in London—Pantomimes and Christmas Plays.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS to the readers of *The Sketch*, one and all, from "The Man in the Street"! Anyhow, if we can't be merry, let us be as merry as we can be, as the Irishman said. I think that our manners and customs are changing in this matter and that the Christmas season is becoming less and less a time of merriment and over-eating and drinking, and more a period of repose. How our forefathers used to eat and drink in the early Victorian days, if we may trust Dickens, and I suppose that he wrote of what he heard and saw about him every day! But at Christmas-time they surpassed themselves and put away enormous quantities of food and liquor. I am not saying that some of us even nowadays cannot ply a good knife-and-fork, but I am pretty sure that our efforts are but child's-play to the feats of the English of sixty or seventy years ago.

I am glad to see that the big shops which deal in drapery, hardware, and other things that nobody wants at holiday-time are going to close for some days, many of them from Tuesday to Monday. It is a great relief to "The Man in the Street" and his wife and children to be able to get away into the country for a few days, and to stand aside from the rush and hurry of the great Capital, if only for a short time. Those who have relations in the country have a jolly good time of it and I have always looked on the Christmas and Easter outings as unmixed blessings. They give one a breathing-space and provide renewed energy for facing the rigours of the spring.

But I find that there is another side to the question which deserves to be put on record. There are girls, and even men, in the big shops who have nowhere to go and no one to put them up for the holidays. If they stay in town, they find it precious dull, and they cannot afford to go into the country or to the seaside. Holiday-making is an expensive luxury if you have to pay for your board and lodging every time you go away for a bit, and every afternoon and evening at the theatre would be monotonous, even if it did not cost money. There ought to be some charitable association to help the people who have nowhere to go at these holiday-times.

And, talking of theatres, I am very glad to see that the good old name "Adelphi" will most likely be restored to us. "The Man in the Street" was one of the very first to protest, both in *The Sketch* and in the street, against that meaningless new name, the "Century," which was stuck on to his favourite old playhouse. We all knew the "Adelphi," with its capital melodramas in which poor Bill Terriss used to fascinate us, and it took a lot of remembering to grasp the fact that its place had been taken by the "Century," with American musical farce. Give us back the old name, gentlemen, and, if you can, the old plays with a new Terriss.

The shops have been uncommonly bright this Christmas. Everything has been shiny, from the diamonds and other jewels of a sort to the boots and shoes in the windows. The colours in the women's shops have been quite startling, but the one thing I have missed this year has been the holly and other greenery with which the shops used to be decked. In that way, this has been the least Christmassy Christmas I can remember. Another thing, I have never seen so few people in the shops as this season. Why, I don't know, for the presents have been prettier than ever. Perhaps they cost too much.

By the way, I hope that you all posted your Christmas-cards early and paid attention to the Postmaster-General's remarks on red envelopes and other matters. Red envelopes are used chiefly for Press communications to morning papers, and if other missives are enclosed in them they run the risk of going astray. If the only girl you love never received that beautiful Christmas-card, it would be but poor consolation to know that some leather-hearted Editor had thrown it into his wastepaper-basket.

The storms and winds of the week before Christmas have brought my old friends the gulls in enormous numbers to the Embankments and the parks. The birds get quite tame in the winter, and it is one of the sights of London to watch them coming for food between Blackfriars and Waterloo Bridges every afternoon from twelve to three. People regularly bring them bread, and they soon get to know where their friends are. In St. James's Park these sea-pirates come and rob the wretched ducks and other fancy fowl on the lake. There are all the elements of a tragi-comedy in the way in which a gull will swoop down and snatch a morsel from the very beak of a fat duck. Those who fancy that a duck is a bird with an expressionless countenance make a mistake.

To-morrow we shall be in the thick of the Pantomimes and Christmas Play season. Were it not for Drury Lane, one might say that Pantomime had been completely banished to the outlying theatres, and its place taken by the Christmas Play, which, after all, is not very different from what the first part of a Pantomime used to be.

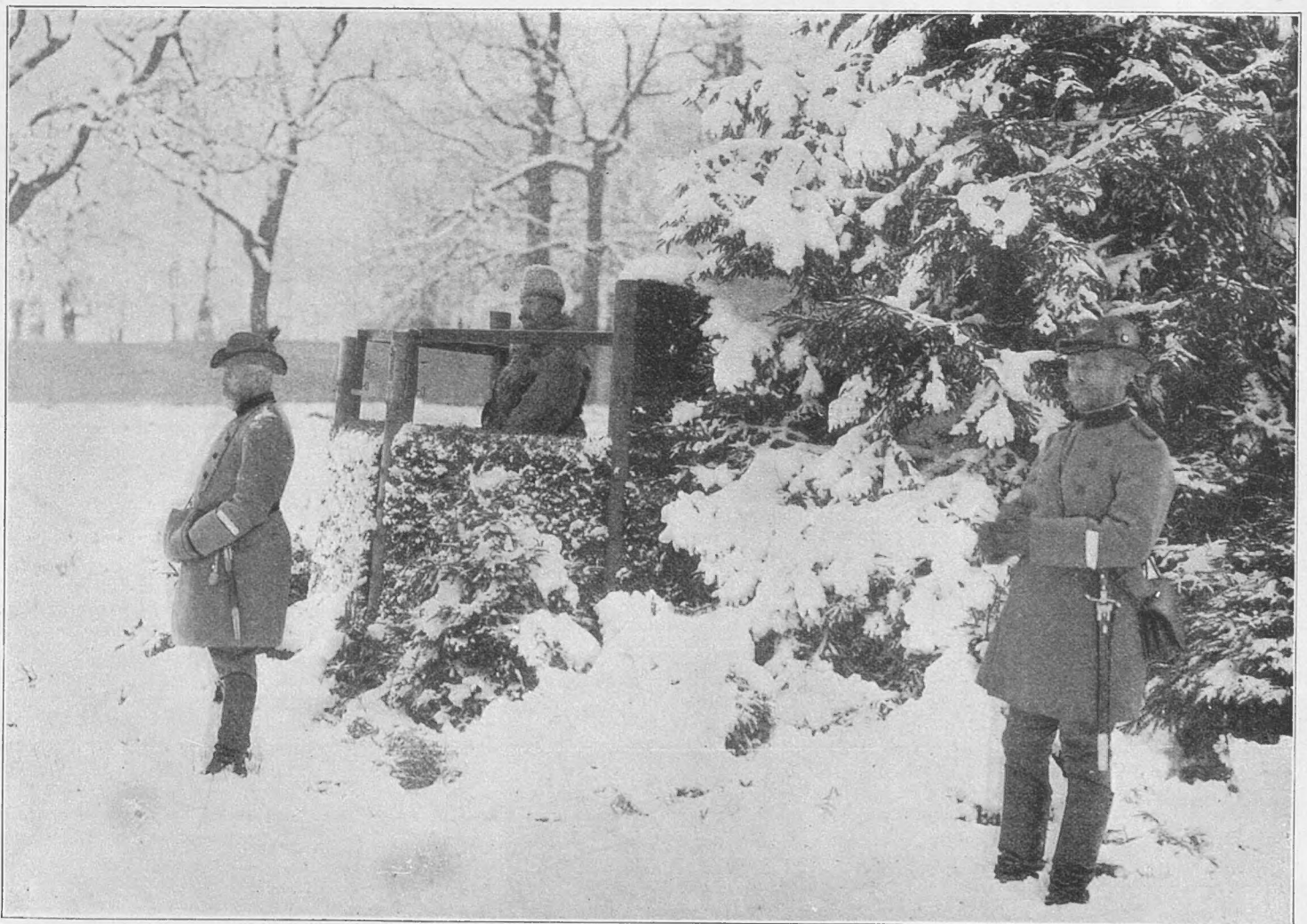
THE KAISER'S CHRISTMAS SPORT.

From Photographs by Ziesler, Berlin.



The Kaiser.

THE KAISER AND HIS GUESTS DRIVING TO THE SHOOT.



The Kaiser.

[See Next Page.

THE KAISER WAITING FOR WILD BOAR.

AN IRISH-AMERICAN WEDDING.

QUIETLY on Saturday last, at St. Michael's Church, Chester Square, S.W., the Earl of Donoughmore and Miss Elena Grace were wedded. The bridegroom, Richard John Walter Hely-Hutchinson, sixth Earl of Donoughmore, is an officer in the Royal Irish Regiment, and was private secretary to Sir H. A. Blake, Governor of Hong-Kong, where he won golden opinions from all classes of people. He is better known, perhaps, as Lord Suirdale, as he succeeded his father only a few months ago, and the family seats are Knocklofty and Kilmanahan Castle, Clonmel. The bride is the second daughter of Mr and Mrs. M. P. Grace, of 40, Belgrave Square, and "Porters," Shenley, Herts. Mr. Grace, although he resides in England and owns land here, is a wealthy American, and once filled the important office of Mayor of New York.

Those who witnessed the ceremony on Saturday were unanimous in saying that it was one of the prettiest of the season. A smart little page in bright-red satin, and five bridesmaids wearing three-quarter Empire-coats of cream cloth and skirts of embroidered crêpe-de-Chine, large white picture-hats adorned with long white feathers, and scarves of chiffon from the hats, fastened, Hussar fashion, on the shoulder, formed the bride's attendants; while she herself wore a dress composed entirely of Brussels lace, and a long train of transparent silver-embroidered chiffon, and, in place of the usual bouquet, carried a prayer-book given to her by the Countess of Donoughmore. Canon Fleming and the Sub-Dean of the Chapels Royal between them tied the nuptial knot, and the Earl of Malmesbury acted as best man. After the reception, held at 40, Belgrave Square, the Earl and Countess of Donoughmore departed for their honeymoon, which they are spending abroad.

THE CHAPERON.

The King as Godfather—His Many Godsons—Great House-Parties—"Hose and Santa Claus"—Old Customs Revived—A Girl Hostess at Downing Street.

FOR the second time only since his Accession the King has stood sponsor in person to a non-Royal infant. The lucky baby so honoured is the son-and-heir of Sir Archibald and Lady Edmonstone, who were married some years before the birth of this important addition to His Majesty's godsons. King Edward, as Prince of Wales, was always willing "to stand" for old friends' children, and among the Peers who have the right to call their Sovereign godfather are Lord Castlemaine and the Dukes of Marlborough and St. Albans; while the elder sons are more numerous, and include one "V.C.," namely, Lord Fincastle. Lord Dalmeny, the little Marquis of Blandford, Lord Wendover, Sir Albert Naylor-Leyland, and the son of the Grand Duke Michael and of the Countess Torby are all godsons of the King, and are frequently reminded of the fact in the pleasantest fashion, for His Majesty is a judicious as well as a generous gift-giver.

As regards the celebration of Christmas, there is certainly a return to old ways, and nowadays scarce a great country house-party but turns Yuletide into a regular children's festival. Of course, Sandringham sets the tune to which even the greatest hostesses dance, and it is quite curious to see the change which has come over the Christmas scene since the mid-Victorian era. In those days smart folk rather scoffed at the due observance of old Christmas customs, and the young people's Christmas-trees and the Christmas dinners perforce offered to one's tenants were regarded as "Rather a bore, but really a duty, don't you know." The twentieth century has seen a return to the huge family gatherings in which our forbears delighted, to the lavish gift-giving which made (and makes) Christmas week rather a terror to the impecunious, and to a revival of the old customs which have about them much that is cheery and touching.

I hear that even the Santa Claus stocking-filling has come again into fashion, and not only for the benefit of the smaller members of each house-party. Indeed, the members of one very smart Christmas house-party have been warned, I hear, that "hose and Santa Claus" are to play an all-important part in the proceedings, and rows of fine old oak doors have been embellished or defaced—the term is one of choice—by the addition to each of a gilt nail, on which is to be suspended on Christmas Eve the dainty receptacle for Santa Claus' gifts! It is only too easy to imagine the horror with which the mid-Victorian chaperon would have regarded such an episode.

Of course, Christmas is celebrated in a more—dare one say?—seemly

fashion in the great ducal mansions—Chatsworth, Blenheim, Arundel Castle, Goodwood House, to mention but a few—but in each and all of them the host and hostess give their guests splendid Yuletide gifts, these often taking the form of jewellery. Dancing is rather at a discount, perhaps partly because no great hostess having however slight an official connection with the Court can give a ball till after the last week in January. Still, informal dances form a pleasant feature of most Christmas house-parties, and in many great houses a Servants' Ball is a regular feature of Christmas week. This was the case for many years at Sandringham.

Lord Rosebery and his children are spending Christmas at Mentmore. People are still discussing the Chesterfield speech and wondering if it will lead to anything practical. It certainly does seem time, from a social point of view, that the Liberal hostesses should have a turn. There are such charming women among them, and Lady Sybil Primrose would make an admirable "Premier's lady."

THE KAISER'S CHRISTMAS SPORT.

THE bitterly cold weather which now reigns on the Continent, and nowhere more gloriously than in Germany, is hailed with delight by the energetic Kaiser, for hunting in snow-clad forests is a form of sport in which His Imperial Majesty particularly delights. William II., unlike most Royal personages, enjoys nothing better than to pay visits to his loyal subjects during the bleakest winter weather.

He has lately accordingly enjoyed a few days' excellent sport with the Prince and Princess Henry of Pless. Although all the ladies of the house-party, headed by the lovely hostess herself, appeared each evening *en grande toilette*, of course in the deepest mourning, out of compliment to the Imperial guest, the Kaiser himself chose to remain attired in his highly becoming hunting-dress—that is, the picturesque green-and-buff costume known as his "Jagd" uniform. Of course, that donned in the evening by him is not really that worn all day while hunting,

but is an absolute replica of it. During his stay at Pless, the Kaiser enjoyed a great deal of all-round sport, and particularly delighted in a long and exciting stalking expedition in pursuit of two wild buffaloes specially reserved for the Imperial rifle, of which one was killed at the first shot. To an Englishman, used to the rough-and-ready methods of our fox-hunting, and even of our great battues, there is something extraordinary in the way in which the German sportsman takes his ease in a kind of little sentry-box covered with branches, behind which he lies concealed till his quarry is well within reach. There is something rather pathetic in the fact that the German Emperor, powerful as he is, can never fulfil the wish of his heart, namely, to go off on a really great hunting expedition in the wilds of Africa or Asia, as have done so many of his staunch English friends.

THE LATE SIR FRANCIS DE WINTON.

The recent death of Sir Francis de Winton removes one of the distinguished men of our time in the life of London. For several years he was closely connected with the Court, as he filled the offices of Comptroller and Treasurer to the Duke of York, and had a delightful residence in York House. He began his military career in the Royal Artillery after leaving Woolwich, and went out to the Crimea, where he saw a good deal of service. Later on he was "A.D.C." to Sir W. F. Williams for five years in North America, and then he went to Gibraltar, while in 1877-78 he was Military Attaché at Constantinople. When the Duke of Argyll, then Marquis of Lorne, was Governor-General of Canada, Sir Francis acted as his Secretary. Afterwards he served the King of the Belgians as Administrator-General of the Congo in 1884-85, at the time when the Free State was recognised by the leading Powers of Europe and by the United States. Subsequently Sir Francis was Commissioner to Swaziland, but before that he was Assistant-Quartermaster-General at Headquarters. He was an exceedingly courteous man, and those who had business with him, either in his earlier career or, later, at York House, not only obtained all possible consideration from him, but also a kindliness of bearing which made it a pleasure to approach him.



From a Photo.]

MISS ELENA GRACE.



[Photo by Lafayette.]

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE.

MARRIED ON SATURDAY LAST AT ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, CHESTER SQUARE, S.W.

MR. DAN LENO, THE PANTOMIME KING, RECEIVES "THE SKETCH"

Exclusive Photographs by Messrs Foulsham and Banfield, Wigmore Street, W



"Good-morning (My Court bow)."



"Pardon me—my Royal pin."



"Mrs. Leno and Miss May Leno—"The Sketch."



"My pets—a duck and a rabbit."



"Grand exercise, digging!"



"But you want to be in training for it."



"I'm a nailer on horticulture."



"I also play the harp. Don't groan!"



"What? Must go? See you at Drury Lane, then."

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NOTE.—All our Art Plates are produced in London, and not on the Continent.

A PRINCESS'S FIRST PORTRAIT.

THERE is something very charming in the thought that the first photograph of little Princess Yolanda Marguerite of Italy has been taken by her beautiful mother. Queen Helena is an accomplished amateur photographer, and she and the King during their autumn holiday spent many hours with their camera. Princess Yolanda, though her birth was a disappointment to loyal Italy, which longed for a Prince and future King, has already made quite a place for herself in the hearts of her father's subjects. More than fifty years have gone by since a daughter was born to the House of Savoy—in fact, the Queen-Dowager was the last Princess of Savoy, for she is somewhat younger than her sisters-in-law, Maria Pia of Portugal, and the saintly, austere Princess Clotilde Bonaparte. Wonderful stories are told in Roman Society concerning the curious mixture of splendour and simplicity which reigns in the Quirinal nurseries. The baby Princess, who has an English nurse, Miss Dickens, is being managed physically entirely as would be any ordinary English baby. On the other hand, she takes her morning and evening bath in a great basin of pure gold; each of her safety-pins is of the same precious metal, ornamented with some kind of gem; and no Royal child living has a finer collection of toys, though as yet she is too small to play with them. There are now ten male heirs to the Italian Throne, but not one of them very closely related to the King.

HER MAJESTY'S. MR. TREE.
BOXING NIGHT and EVERY EVENING at 8.15,
THE LAST OF THE DANDIES, by Clyde Fitch.
MATINEE EVERY WEDNESDAY and SATURDAY at 2.15.
Box Office (Mr. F. J. Turner) open 10 to 10 HER MAJESTY'S.

LYCEUM THEATRE.
EVERY EVENING at 8 precisely. MATINEE EVERY SATURDAY at 2.
SPECIAL MATINEE BOXING DAY, Dec. 26, at 2.
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Sole Lessee, Mr. J. H. Leigh.
EVERY EVENING, at Eight precisely.

BECKY SHARP.
BECKY SHARP.
BECKY SHARP.

MISS MARIE TEMPEST as BECKY.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—There will be no Matinees or Evening Performances of "Becky Sharp" on Dec. 23, 24, and 25. "Becky Sharp" will be resumed on Dec. 26 at eight o'clock precisely and Every Evening, with full cast, and Saturday Matinees at 2 o'clock.

Box Office 10 to 10. Doors open 7.45.

BECKY SHARP at 8.

GARRICK THEATRE.—Mr. Arthur Bouchier, Lessee and Manager.
Every Evening, at 8 precisely, IRIS, by A. W. PINERO.
Box Office (Mr. Hartley) open 10 to 10.

STRAND THEATRE.—Lessee and Manager, Mr. FRANK CURZON.
EVERY EVENING, at 8 o'clock precisely,
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A Musical Play in Two Acts.
By George Dance. Music by Howard Talbot.
LOUIE FREEAR. GRACIE LEIGH. LIONEL RIGNOLD.

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BOXING DAY,
FRIDAY, Dec. 27, at 2.15.
SATURDAY, Dec. 28,

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SMALL TALK OF THE WEEK.

Their Majesties' First Christmas Day.

King Edward and Queen Alexandra will spend Christmas Day much as they did in the days when they were still Prince and Princess of Wales—that is, at Sandringham. The King delights in all British observances, and the festival is celebrated in thoroughly good old style at our various Royal Palaces. As heretofore, the Christmas-pudding, of which a substantial portion is sent to each of Her late Majesty's descendants at this time of year, will hail from Windsor, as will also the huge baron of beef which will decorate the King's sideboard on Christmas Day.

Their Majesties have always been generous gift-givers, but this year they will, of course, indulge themselves in the pleasant pastime of giving far more than has hitherto been the case, and not only the more important West-End tradesmen, but also many of the local business worthies of Norfolk and Windsor have had reason to rejoice, for the Queen ordered a very large selection of presents to be sent her for approval, and great delight has been caused at the generous and wide distribution of orders. Both the King and Queen take real trouble over the selection of their gifts, thinking not only of what is pretty and generally useful, but also what will be of special pleasure and of lasting use to the recipient. King Edward, who has a wide and catholic taste in modern literature, is fond of giving his own personal friends beautifully bound sets of books, and among the purchases made by him have been five most exquisitely bound volumes and sets of volumes purchased by him from the Guild of Women Binders, who have many Royal patrons. Particularly delightful was His Majesty's choice of "Songs from the Plays of Shakspeare," printed on Japan vellum and bound by Miss Olive Karlake in Niger morocco tooled in a very lovely and uncommon design. Londoners will be gratified to hear that the King also specially chose a pretty volume called "London in Song," compiled by Mr. Wilfred Whitton, and bound by the same artistic Guild in a beautiful green morocco binding.

Coronation Items.

It would appear as if Coronation-robcs would be the only wear and Coronation items the only subject of conversation. The talk of the revival of the Water Pageant is giving many people great satisfaction, but nothing is yet decided concerning it. People are already discussing how the various extra offices which seem to belong to a Coronation will be filled. Of course, there is little doubt that Lord Roberts will be the Lord High Constable. Once this great office was hereditary, but now this is no longer the case. The great Duke of Wellington occupied the office at three Coronations—that of George IV., William IV., and Queen Victoria—and it was his pleasant duty on each of these occasions to assist at the reception of the regalia from the Dean and Chapter of Westminster. Many are exercised, especially collectors and antiquarians, concerning the forthcoming Coronation medal or medals. It is very probable that there will be three types of medal, one in which the King and Queen's portraits will both appear, superimposed, another of the King alone, and a third of the Queen alone. George III. and Queen Charlotte had

separate Coronation medals, some of which have become exceedingly valuable. It is easy to see why the Westminster Hall Banquet is to be dispensed with, but those who delight in the revival of old customs are much disappointed, for it could not have failed to be the most picturesque and striking episode of the various Coronation ceremonies.

The Prince and Princess of Wales.

The Prince and Princess of Wales have made quite a round of visits since the eventful 9th of November, and their Royal Highnesses, who are already the most-travelled of Royal personages, will soon be able to establish a record in the matter of country-house visits. Last week they spent some pleasant days at Bocket Hall, as the guests of Lord Mount-Stephen, the justly famous Canadian Peer who may be said to have built up

that splendid enterprise the Canadian Pacific Railway. Lord Mount-Stephen has always well lived up to his fine motto, "In opposition more daring." Few Peers are more delightfully housed; at Quebec he owns Grand Metis, a fine property dating from French Colonial days; in town he is host of one of the most charming residences in Carlton House Terrace; and Bocket Hall, if somewhat overshadowed by the near proximity of Hatfield, may yet count among the half-dozen most agreeable country mansions within a short distance of the Metropolis.

The little children of the Prince and Princess of Wales are now quite old enough to thoroughly enjoy the delightful Christmas festivities provided for them. The older Royal folk have a busy time of it, not only on the great day itself, but on Christmas Eve and on Boxing Day, for it is not too much to say that literally hundreds of telegrams arrive from all quarters of the world, and a goodly proportion of them must be answered in fitting language. One amusing little touch, not, I fancy, known to many, is the number of telegrams that reach this country addressed to various members of the Royal Family with only "England." Of course, such a message is not, as a rule, much delayed in transmission, even though incorrectly addressed.

The Prince and Princess of Wales spend the day, as do their children, at Sandringham Hall, but every room in their own

pretty country home is decorated in good old style, and the bright, cheerful nurseries are made particularly festive; while huge packing-cases filled with beautiful toys come, as often as not, directly addressed to the fortunate little Royal personage for whom their contents are intended. Room is made for these arrivals by a great clearing-out, which takes place some weeks beforehand, when, by the express wish of the Princess of Wales, not only broken toys, but many extremely beautiful and costly *joujoux* of every sort are carefully put aside to be despatched to Children's Hospitals to brighten the lot of those little ones less fortunate than the happy children of Sandringham Cottage.

The Sunny South.

The bitterly cold weather has driven many well-known people to the Sunny South for Christmas, and the rooms at Monte Carlo are crowded with old habitués. At Cannes it is persistently rumoured that the King will arrive in March, and, as



HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES.

A recent and hitherto unpublished Portrait, taken by Salmon and Batcham, New Bond Street, W.

was foreshadowed in *The Sketch*, will remain on board his yacht, though, of course, he will probably spend a good deal of his time at the Villa Kasbeck with the Grand Duke Michael and the Countess Torby. Cannes is becoming quite the hub of the universe from a social point of view. Already people are talking of the International Regatta, which is to be the most important thing of the kind ever organised there, and preparations are also being made for a number of motor-car races; indeed, some of the older inhabitants rather complain that the automobiles flashing hither and thither are by no means an addition to their enjoyment.

A Beautiful Queen and her Sons.

One of the most lovely Queens in Europe of the day is unquestionably Her Majesty Queen Amélie of Portugal, whose very latest portrait I publish, with those of her two sons, taken in connection with her birthday and that of her Consort, King Carlos, which, curiously enough, fall on the same day. Her Majesty, who is now in her thirty-sixth year, was born at Twickenham during the exile of her parents, the Comte and Comtesse de Paris, and she married at Lisbon, May 22, 1886, the then Prince Royal, Duke of Braganza. She is an exceedingly gifted and clever woman and is the only Princess in Europe who has taken the degree of "M.D." She has also another rare honour, that of being a Dame of the Golden Rose, the mystic Papal Order, now possessed by only one or two other Princesses in Europe. Her sisters are the lovely Duchess d'Aosta, the Duchess de Guise, and the Princess Louise of Orléans, yet unmarried, twenty next February. Her brothers are the Dukes of Orleans and Montpensier, and it is said that the reconciliation which has taken place between the former and King Edward anent the Duke's indiscreet utterances about the disgraceful caricatures of Queen Victoria was due to the tactful intercession of Queen Amélie, who, like her Consort, is on terms of the most intimate friendship with His Majesty and Queen Alexandra.

The Queen has two sons, the Duke of Braganza, fourteen in March, and the Duke of Beja, twelve the other day. As may be seen from the portraits, one is destined for the Army and the other for the Navy, the latter being also the profession of the father, who is, like King Edward, passionately fond of the sea. Next year he will again race for the famous Vasco da Gama Cup, won this year by the Hon. Rupert Guinness with his yacht *Leander*, King Carlos having for the purpose purchased the *Banshee*, formerly owned by Colonel McCalmont, and now being refitted at Lisbon and re-named the *Amélie*. King Carlos, by the way, is related to our Royal Family, his grandfather being Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg, cousin of the late Prince Consort.

Lord Rosebery and Clyne Castle.

Some time of the interval between his great and eagerly expected speech with which, it might be said, Lord Rosebery began last week at Chesterfield, and that with which he closed the week, when on Saturday he delivered a short address on Municipal Government on receiving the Freedom of Swansea, his Lordship was guest at Clyne Castle of Mr. Graham Vivian, brother of

the late Lord Swansea. There were a number of distinguished visitors to meet the ex-Premier at the Castle, including their Serene Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Teck, the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, the Earl and Countess of Bradford, Earl and Lady Bathurst, &c. In October 1888 the late Duke and Duchess of Teck, accompanied by Princess May (now Princess of Wales), visited Clyne Castle, and in August 1891 the late Prince Henry of Battenberg was a guest there. Clyne Castle is picturesquely situated. Nestling in luxuriant foliage, it overlooks Swansea Bay and Bristol Channel. The mansion contains a great variety of articles of antiquity, including many fine examples of tapestry. Mr. Graham Vivian owns extensive shooting-grounds in the neighbourhood, where excellent sport is provided for his guests.

Two of Lord Rosebery's children, Lord Dalmeny, his elder son, and Lady Crewe, his younger daughter, celebrate their birthdays next month. Lord Dalmeny, who, by the way, accompanied Lord Rosebery on the platform at Chesterfield, will attain his twentieth birthday on Jan. 8. He is not likely to return to Sandhurst after the Christmas holidays, and early in the new year he will in all probability join the Scots Greys, for which he has been preparing. Lord Dalmeny, who is tall in comparison with his father, is an enthusiastic devotee of out-of-door sports; he is a first-class all-round cricketer, which has been demonstrated on repeated occasions at Eton and Harrow, and at all the great football contests he is generally a spectator. Lord Dalmeny's mind has long been set on the military profession, and it goes without

saying that he will make both a capable and popular officer. The Hon. Neil James Archibald, who travelled with his father from St. Pancras to Chesterfield, is not quite a year the junior of his brother and has not yet made final choice of a vocation. Lord Rosebery's heir has made his own choice of profession, as was the case with his two daughters, who were trained, according to the wish of their late mother, at the School of Cookery and Domestic Economy at Edinburgh, to which Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, presented certificates to successful pupils on her way South the other day. The result of the choice of Lord Rosebery's daughters is that Lady Sybil Primrose is a practical and first-class cook, while Lady Crewe is thoroughly versed in the art and all the duties pertaining to the position of upper housemaid. Both young ladies, it is recorded, took their work quite seriously and brought much more wholehearted energy to its accomplishment than one sometimes finds in those who make their living by domestic service.

The New Strephon.

Mr. Brodric's comparison of Lord Rosebery to Strephon in "*Iolanthe*" has been justified by the ex-Premier's two hours' speech at Chesterfield. His Imperialist head has crept through the keyhole, but his anti-Government legs are left kicking outside. The *Daily News* and the *Standard*, which stand at the two Poles of politics, denounce him with equally strong language, although he has contrived to please less extreme men on both sides. Yet his lot is not a happy one. *Punch* represents the Chesterfield



HER MAJESTY QUEEN AMÉLIE OF PORTUGAL.

Photo by Camacho, Lisbon.



H.R.H. PRINCE LUIZ FILIPE OF PORTUGAL, DUKE OF BRAGANZA.

Photo by Bobone, Lisbon.



H.R.H. PRINCE MANUEL OF PORTUGAL, DUKE OF BEJA.

Photo by Bobone, Lisbon.

Hamlet lamenting that ever he was asked to set his Party right. He is willing to lead, but "C-B." won't follow. So next Session may be like the last. The Liberal-Imperialists will vote with "C-B." when his tactics please them, and Mr. Labouchere and his friends will accuse them of intrigues against the Leader of the Party in the House of

called, for her first husband was the present Duke of Manchester's grandfather, is one of the very few Peeresses who are of foreign birth, her father having been a distinguished Hanoverian diplomat. Devonshire House has long been one of the great political centres of smart London life, and many people believe that the Duchess of Devonshire may yet live to see her husband become Prime Minister.

The Prince at Hall Barn.

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales has been paying a round of visits in the country, among others to Lord and Lady Iveagh, at Elveden Hall, Thetford, and to Sir Edward Lawson, at Hall Barn, Bucks. The Prince drove from Elveden to Thetford by motor, and from thence to Ely, where he went on by ordinary train to Beaconsfield, in the vicinity of which is Sir Edward's fine mansion. The Prince spent from Friday afternoon till Monday of last week with Sir Edward, who, of course, is well known as the principal proprietor of the *Daily Telegraph*. He was created a Baronet some twenty years ago, and is now close upon seventy, having been born in 1833. He was High Sheriff for Buckinghamshire in 1886, and was President of the Royal Institute of Journalists in the same year. He is a Lieutenant for the City of London.

The Kaiser's Famous Anti-Duelling Speech.

Hardly had the story of the Kaiser's alleged anti-duelling speech (writes my Berlin representative) gone the round of the entire German Press than an indignant semi-official denial was printed in two or three of the more sober Berlin papers. This, however, seemed not to quite convince the public. A stern denial was then printed officially. Since then, however, a further step has been taken by the regiment affected. Legal proceedings have been instituted against the little local paper in Potsdam which was the first to start the rumour. Despite the official denial and the prompt legal action ensuing thereon, there are many people who implicitly believe the whole story. Of course, say they, the story must be denied; it would not be to the advantage of the German Army if it were not promptly quashed at the outset.

The Kaiser's Russian Guest.

The Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovitch arrived at the Friedrichstrasse Station in Berlin on Sunday week at 7 p.m., and was met on the platform by the Emperor William, Prince Frederick Leopold, Prince Frederick Henry, and Prince Joachim Albrecht. Despite the driving snow and draughtiness of the station, the reception was very pleasing to see. Drawn up along the platform and dressed in the old-fashioned garb affected by their forefathers were the Kaiser Alexander Regiment, to the select number of a whole company; outside the barrier carefully put up by the Prussian guardians of the public safety were crowds of enthusiastic spectators, while downstairs in the streets were hundreds of merry Christmas folk shouting and gesticulating and stopping all the traffic. Altogether, there was a feeling of real Christmas joviality in the air.

The next day, deer-shooting was indulged in near by in the Grönwald. Here there were no less than two thousand five hundred deer to choose from, so the sportsmen had excellent opportunity of showing their prowess. It has been rumoured in Berlin that it is intended by the forest authorities to shoot off all the deer from the beloved Grönwald, which is to Berlin much what the Home Park is to



HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE.

Photo by Alice Hughes, Gower Street.

Commons. Lord Rosebery may be congratulated on the fidelity of his friends. Some of the cleverest members of the Opposition have clung to his cause, even while he ploughed his lonely furrow, and they rallied to his standard when he left agriculture and resumed politics.

Lord Rosebery's Speech and the Press.

Few people realised the difficulties which beset the newspapers in their efforts to ensure a report of Lord Rosebery's speech the morning following the night of its delivery (writes a correspondent). The elements had conspired against them. All over the kingdom the storm had worked such devastation that some thousands of miles of wire had been blown down. The authorities at the Central Telegraph Office, headed by Mr. W. C. Nops, discovered, on starting the work of restoration, that the telegraph-poles were frozen into the ground and had to be dug out. The newspapers all over the kingdom had had to resort to the train-service for the supply of news. Even private telegrams were taking ten hours from Berwick to London. Press telegrams to Yorkshire and Lancashire, Scotland and Ireland, were twenty-four hours late. Mr. Nops could give the News Agencies very little assurance even up to the very day before the delivery of the speech. One great News Agency contemplated running special trains from Chesterfield to London and the North. At last, the Central Telegraph Office was able to say that, by concentrating the whole of its resources, it might be able to get a single wire open. If all the newspapers would combine to cut down descriptive reporting and sacrifice everything else to the speech, it might be possible to succeed in distributing the report. This was agreed to. The News Agencies combined. A very heavy contingent of reporters amalgamated, one News Agency sending down no less than ten, and, by an almost perfect system of "clocking" and confining each reporter to what is known technically as "one-minute takes," the speech was written out and on the wires almost by the time Lord Rosebery had finished his oration. The first folio of "copy" was handed in to the Chesterfield Telegraph Office at 6.40 and was received in London at 7.20. This rate of transmission was practically maintained throughout, and, instead of delay, the report was really in advance of those of great speeches on an average night in a newspaper office.

A Duchess Ever Young and Fair.

The Duchess of Devonshire, who is entertaining a very large house-party this week (Christmas) and who will spend a portion of next week at Sandringham, might truly be dubbed "Duchess ever young and fair," for she has retained the beauty which was at one time world-famous to a quite extraordinary degree, and she can afford to be proud of the fact that she is a great-grandmother! The "Double Duchess," as she is sometimes



SIR EDWARD LAWSON (PROPRIETOR OF THE "DAILY TELEGRAPH"), WITH WHOM THE PRINCE OF WALES HAS RECENTLY BEEN STAYING.

Photo by Barrauds, Oxford Street, W.

the inhabitants of Eton and Windsor. This, however, is not the case. Last year, no deer were shot, and therefore it was decided to shoot more extensively this year, and it was this that probably gave rise to the report. The deer, by the way, in the Grönwald are so tame now that they will eat bread from your hand if you take the trouble to go up to them and offer it.

Christmastide in Berlin.

Berlin is generally a well-ordered, rather empty-looking town, as compared with London. Now, during these few days prior to Christmas, it is a whirling throng of pushing, jostling, purchasing public. There being no room left on the pavements, one has perforce to walk in the street and run the risk of being trodden on by cab-horses, crushed by electric-cars, or run into by butcher-boys on tricycles. At all the corners stand men selling machine-toys, shouting out to the passers-by the powers of their "Crossing Sweepers," "Automobiles," "Walking Geese," and "Dancing Bears." And very amusing it is, too, to watch these newest ideas in the way of toys whirling round and round and jerking backwards and forwards, as the case may be. Even hosts of grown people stand for ten minutes at a time watching the antics of the brown bear dancing with a green parasol over its head.

But if the streets are full, what are the large warehouses? It is simply fearful and horrible. The small amount of air that once, perhaps, existed inside these spacious buildings has all been long since vitiated by the ever-increasing stream of loitering buyers. The salesmen are at their wits' end, while the hosts of detectives find it all they can do to keep up with the thieves who infest the premises from early till late. Meanwhile, the snow is lying thick in the streets and on the roads, and cheery school-children are rushing up and down with their sleighs and their toboggans, pelting each other with snow and making slides across the foot-paths. The poor unemployed, too, of whom there are at least thirty-five thousand now in Berlin alone, are at last obtaining a little work in consequence of the fall of snow, at the time of writing there being employed by the Municipality for this purpose two thousand four hundred men—a small percentage, it is true, of the total number in search of work. It is probable that numbers of these unfortunates will also be employed sweeping the lakes, where skating has already commenced.

Royalties' Lottery Prizes.

Perhaps nowhere in the world is the system of lotteries so prevalent as in Germany. Whenever any money has to be raised for some object the means employed is a lottery. Whatever the deserving object, whether it be Church, State, or private, the same system is used. As a rule, a lottery-ticket in the State lotteries costs three shillings and threepence. The threepence goes to pay the State revenue; the three shillings pay the expenses and the profit. The other day the Kaiser and the Kaiserin each won a prize. This time the lottery was in aid of the artists. The Emperor won an oil-painting, called "Evening on the Dunes," by Klarenbach.

The Empress's prize was an oil-painting by K. Becker, entitled "Bravo." The Kaiser had bought no less than a hundred lottery-tickets, so it is not surprising that His Majesty won yet another prize; the second one consisted of three pictures—"A Village Street," by Henseler; a watercolour by Rose, "Peaches and Grapes"; and a sketch by Doering, called "Fire at the Wharf."

The Bismarck Monument.

The celebrated monument of the late Prince Bismarck standing opposite the Reichstag, which was unveiled by the Kaiser with such pomp months ago, is already beginning to look the worse for wear. The white stone figures which surround the chief statue are becoming green and the weather is having a visible effect on the stonework. The Berlin Municipality have just taken over the onus of keeping the monument in

repair and have expressed their intention of spending no less than £50 per annum on it.

Potsdam Castle.

As there is every probability of a hard winter setting in here (adds my Berlin Correspondent), the Royal Household will undoubtedly remove from the Royal Castle to the Potsdam Castle. This Castle, which is situated in the town of Potsdam itself, is much drier than the other one, and was always used by the present Emperor in the days of his bachelorhood. Anyway, the Royal Family will not come to Berlin.

Major-General F. W. Kitchener.

Major-General Kitchener, who recently arrived home from "the Front," has been a good deal before the public lately. Eight years younger than his distinguished brother, Major-General Kitchener joined the West Yorkshire Regiment twenty-five years ago, and served with distinction in the Afghan War of 1878-80 under Lord Roberts, and in the Dongola and Khartoum Expeditions a few years ago. He took out the 2nd Battalion of his regiment to South Africa in the early stages of the War, and his leadership was such a success that he was soon given the command of the 7th Infantry Brigade. Recommended strongly by Sir Redvers Buller as eminently deserving of advance-

ment, the then Brevet-Colonel Kitchener was promoted to his present rank for distinguished service, and he has since done much good work as a commander. His Aide-de-Camp, Captain A. Speyer, of the 4th (Militia) Battalion of the West Yorks, who accompanied Major-General Kitchener throughout the campaign and has also come home, has been strongly recommended for consideration.

A touching feature of Major-General Kitchener's arrival at Southampton was the presence of nine non-commissioned officers of his regiment who had served under him in South Africa and who had been deputed by their comrades to present him with a souvenir of their regard. Major-General Kitchener, who has just had the sorrow of losing his wife by death in South Africa, hopes to return to "the Front" in a few weeks' time. He is one of the most popular officers in the whole British Army, and on the occasion of his leaving for England the scene was almost pathetic.



MISS ETHEL MATTHEWS, NOW PLAYING IN "ARE YOU A MASON?" AT THE SHAFTESBURY.

Photo by R. W. Thomas, Cheapside.

The King's Coronation Robes.

Although so much has been said and written about the Coronation-robcs of the Peers and Peeresses, His Majesty's dress, as the chief figure in the great ceremony, has received comparatively little attention. However, this will lack nothing in the way of picturesque magnificence, for it will consist of a cloth-of-gold under-jacket embroidered with palm-branches



KERSAL CELL, WHERE JOHN BYRON COMPOSED "CHRISTIANS, AWAKE, SALUTE THE HAPPY MORN."

Photo by H. Walker, Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

and the floral emblems of the three Kingdoms, and a stole with the Cross of St. George, the Royal Crown, and the Rose, Shamrock, and Thistle embroidered in gold thread. The cope, a most magnificent garment, will be decorated with silver eagles and fleur-de-lis and roses, while shamrocks and thistles will be worked into the general design. The fleur-de-lis is, of course, a survival of the time when English Kings claimed also to be rulers of France.

Kersal Cell.

This quaint building is situated at Kersal, on the outskirts of the city of Manchester. It was formerly a religious house, and in later years became the residence of the Byron family. It was here that John Byron, poet and stenographer, was born, and within the walls of this old-world dwelling he composed that immortal hymn which will be on so many lips this Christmastide—"Christians, awake, salute the happy morn." Byron also wrote his "Colin and Phoebe" at Kersal.

Gift to Bolton.

At a Special Meeting of the Bolton Town Council, held on Monday the 2nd inst., a letter was read from Mr. W. H. Lever, of "Sunlight Soap" fame, conveying an offer of a most munificent character and one of interest to the whole of Lancashire. The gift consists of about three hundred and sixty statute acres of land, and comprises nearly all the parish of Rivington, including the whole of the Rivington Hall Estate and the famous Rivington Pike. Mr. Lever acquired the estate only a year or two ago, and, prior to leaving England in September last, on a visit to the Associated Companies (offshoots of Port Sunlight) in the Colonies and America, he instructed his solicitors to convey to the people of Bolton (his native town) this municipal playground. At a recent meeting of the Town Council—convened for the purpose—the gift was accepted with gratitude and enthusiasm.

A Fifeshire Romance.

Public interest in the late George Johnston, the recluse Laird of Lathrisk, Fife, has again been excited by the discovery of his will in an old silk dress which had come into the possession of a middle-aged lady. The will is of date 1869, and the dress in which it was found was that of a woman who died twenty-five years ago. On the death of the laird, last December, search was made in vain for such a document. The nearest male heir was Lieutenant Maitland Makgill Crichton, who at the time of the death of Mr. Johnston was serving in the Soudan with his regiment, the Seaforth Highlanders. He is descended from Mary Johnston, only daughter of David Johnston and Mary Robertson, who was married in 1794 to Charles Maitland Makgill Crichton of Rankeillow, Fife. She was, therefore, the aunt of the recluse laird. The estates were entailed and he came into possession of them, but there was a movable estate of some eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds. The will is in

favour of Miss Margaret Preston, who is directed to pay certain sums to servants, to the Church of Scotland for mission purposes, and one thousand pounds to the factor of the estate, "and to Miss Ann Preston, whom I dearly love, I bequeath the half of my belongings." In the event of these ladies predeceasing him, their heirs and successors are to inherit what was intended for them. For over thirty years the Laird of Lathrisk had lived the life of a recluse. His father had added estate to estate in his lifetime and hoarded his great wealth with avaricious care, and is believed to have left over a million of money to the late laird.

Christmas Gifts.

King Edward, who sets a good example to the nation by making all around him specially happy at Christmas-time, continues his support to Alderman Sir William Treloar's beneficent fund for distributing five thousand well-stocked hampers to crippled children confined to their homes, and for providing a cheery New Year's Eve banquet at the Guildhall for the crippled youngsters able to go there. Readers of *The Sketch* wishing to assist in this charitable work should hasten to post their subscriptions to Sir William Treloar, the kind-hearted founder of the feast, 69, Ludgate Hill, E.C. Tom Smith's Crackers, richer in amusement and in inventiveness than ever this season, comprising, as they do, regal "Coronation" bonbons and diverting "Games of Celebrities" to set the table in a roar, will not only crown the feast at many a rich man's Yuletide dinner, but will afford recreation to the pallid, suffering hosts of little ones in hospital, on whose behalf the *Truth* Toy Fund is benevolently set on foot. Then there is "Dagonet's" *Referee* Poor Children's Dinner Fund, which does so much to mitigate the acute distress that winter brings to the lowliest in London, and which is deservedly supported at numberless Smoking Concerts and festive gatherings. *The Sketch* can vouch for the exemplary manner in which this most serviceable Children's Dinner Fund is administered, and urges everyone to send a donation promptly to Mrs. E. M. Burgwin, the self-sacrificing treasurer and organiser, 21, Claylands Road, Clapham, S.W.

The German Plays.

It is not surprising that "Krieg im Frieden," by G. von Moser and Fr. von Schönthan, played on Tuesday, the 17th, at St. George's Hall, should be an old favourite in Germany, for it is full of merriment and gaiety and the dialogue is particularly brightly written. English maidens have not, perhaps, realised of what fun and amusement they were deprived by the passing of the law in England "No billeting on private houses," but it is evident from "Krieg im Frieden" that the young people in Germany are fully alive to the delights of these sudden invasions, for great excitement reigned in the house of Herr Heindorf when it was known that the manoeuvres were to take place near the town. Having the charge of a very flighty niece, Ilka Etwös, Herr Heindorf considered it a master-stroke when he obtained permission to entertain the General instead of the four officers originally allotted to him; but the "General" meant the General's Staff, which included an extremely fascinating young Adjutant. It takes five Acts to give in detail the various divagations of all the young people concerned, and engagements are arranged with such rapidity that it is to be wondered, if this is the general rule on these occasions, that there is an unmarried soldier left in Germany. It was a pleasure to see Fräulein Elsa Gademann again, and she was very charming as the wilful Ilka, who endeavours to play a very lofty game



AN AVENUE IN RIVINGTON PIKE, THE SPLENDID ESTATE PRESENTED TO BOLTON BY MR. W. H. LEVER, OF "SUNLIGHT SOAP" FAME.

with Kurt von Folgen, but burns her own fingers. Max Eissfeldt was well in the picture as the gay young Lieutenant, and Hans Andresen as the rival officer in the affections of Ilka was particularly good. It is difficult to keep track of the many pairs of lovers, for, of course, the excitement extends to the basement and the servants play no small part in the proceedings. On the departure of the military, no less than four weeping maidens are gathered together in lamentation; but, of course, the fifth Act puts all things right. The play at times becomes absolutely farcical; but, on the whole, it went very well indeed, for the whole of the cast rendered with great spirit the debonair, light-hearted atmosphere of the piece.

*Europe to America
Overland.*

I give herewith a photograph of Mr. Harry de Windt, the intrepid explorer, who has just started on his third attempt to accomplish an overland journey, *via* Behring Strait, between Europe and America. Mr. de Windt's first expedition, some five years ago, when he started from New York, was so far successful that he managed to reach the Asiatic shore of the Strait, but was then taken prisoner by the Tchuktchi chief, Koari, and, narrowly escaping with his life, was forced to retrace his steps. Last year he attempted the trip in the reverse direction, but, owing to the political situation in China and on the Amur, Count Lamsdorff refused permission for him to cross Siberia, and Mr. de Windt had again to relinquish the idea. Now, however, he starts under happier auspices, for the Russian Government has given him every facility, and instructions have been cabled from St. Petersburg to the remote settlements of Northern Siberia that reindeer and dogs shall be held in readiness for Mr. de Windt's use. The United States

authorities, too, are rendering him every assistance possible. If the conditions permit, Behring Strait will be crossed on the ice; but if not, the United States revenue cutter *Bear* will convey the expedition across.

However, before the Strait is reached, a weary journey lies before Mr. de Windt and his party, for from Irkutsk, the railway terminus, a distance of thirteen hundred miles will have to be traversed by means of sleighs to Yakutsk. Here Mr. de Windt, who is accompanied by Vicomte de Clinchamp-Bellegarde, will pick up Mr. George Harding—his companion in all his previous travels—who went on before to get together dog and reindeer teams. After a fortnight's stay at Yakutsk, the party will set out for Nijni-Kolymsk,



MR. HARRY DE WINDT, WHO IS GOING OVERLAND, FROM EUROPE TO AMERICA.

Photo by Poterat, Montreux.

on the Arctic Ocean. This means another long and arduous journey of some fifteen hundred miles over unknown and practically uninhabited country, and transport will be by means of teams of reindeer. Thence, Mr. de Windt hopes to accompany a chance Tchuktchi fur or ivory caravan to the shore of Behring Strait, a dreary stretch of fifteen hundred miles, and then to cross to Cape Prince of Wales, the most westerly point of America, where the Strait is only about the width of the English Channel. Mr. de Windt's chief object is to survey the country to the North-East of Yakutsk, to which the Russian Government intends to make a railway, with a possible extension to Behring Strait. On the American side surveyors are already at work, and, though the terrific currents and ice-floes preclude the possibility of bridging the Strait, American and Belgian engineers have under consideration the construction of a tunnel, as the water is comparatively shallow. Both the Vicomte de Clinchamp-Bellegarde and Mr. George Harding accompanied Mr. de Windt on his disastrous 1896 expedition.

*"The Doll's
House": a New
Reading by
"Truth."*

Mr. Labouchere is never seen to such advantage by the public eye as when that genial cynic is giving himself boundless trouble over the *Truth* Dolls' Show. This year's function was the most brilliant and successful yet held. Nearly six thousand dolls were on view, as well as many beautiful toys. Of course, the interest of most of the innumerable visitors to the Albert Hall centred on the exquisitely dressed figure of a "Peeress in her Coronation Robes," every detail of the elaborate costume being carefully carried out with sumptuous accuracy.

Very successful also were "Shamrock III.," a pretty doll carrying Sir Thomas Lipton's portrait; "The Duchess of Devonshire, after Gainsborough"; and "The Last of the Dandies."

*The Retiring Head-
Master of
Christ's Hospital.*

The imminent departure, so to speak, of Christ's Hospital from Newgate Street to Horsham is brought home to us in London by the announcement of the retirement of the Rev. Richard Lee

from the Head-Mastership and the appointment of the Rev. Arthur William Upcott, Head-Master of St. Edmund's School at Canterbury, as his successor. Mr. Lee, who retires on a pension after twenty-five years' service, is known to many generations of Old Blues as a rigid disciplinarian—still, it was rather by force of character that he governed than by the heavy hand. He is comparatively a young man, and his departure from the head of Christ's will be greatly regretted. But at a time when the school is to break away from its old traditions—at least, those of them associated with its historic buildings—he may have felt the new circumstances called for a New Man. Mr. Upcott is an Exeter College man (First Class, Mods., 1876), and the Council of Almoners of Christ's (as its governing body is called) selected him out of a great number of candidates. The position is worth £1500 a-year, with a residence.



REV. R. LEE, THE RETIRING HEAD-MASTER OF CHRIST'S HOSPITAL.

Photo by Elliott and Fry, Baker Street, W.

One of the most colossal works ever published has just been issued by the United States Government. This is the compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies in the War of the Rebellion. This book has been preparing for the past forty years, and now consists of 128 volumes and 138,575 pages, and an atlas with about 1000 maps and sketches. Its cost has been about six million pounds. It is estimated that more than twenty families have lived comfortably out of this book during the whole time of its preparation.



FROM THE "TRUTH" DOLL'S SHOW: A PEERESS IN HER CORONATION ROBES.

Photo by the Rembrandt Portrait Studio, Mortimer Street, W.

SMALL TALK ON THE BOULEVARDS.

*Christmas Day in
Lutetia.*

If it is fine, it is the maddest, merriest day of all the year for the little Parisian folk, is Christmas (writes the Paris Correspondent of *The Sketch*). They swarm to the Gardens of the Luxembourg and the Tuileries, to the Champs-Élysées, and all along the Avenue du Bois-de-Boulogne loaded with the dollies and toys that "le petit Jésus," as they know our Santa Claus, has brought down the chimney. And the contempt of the dolly at one-and-nine for that at one-and-three, and the arrogance of the owner of a toy automobile for the simple monkey on a bicycle! It takes years off the tired man's life, and is the happiest moment for the fiery-penned Henri Rochefort, whose love of children's laughter is the only relief of his militant life. As to the parents, they are noticeable by their absence, and the few who do show sign of life suggest that they would be better in bed. It is not Christmas that is fêted in Paris, but the Réveillon. Once the Mass in the churches is over, there is the cry of "Noël! Noël!" and all the world rushes to the restaurants that are open all night. Always the cry of "Noël!" and always the popping of champagne-corks. Some tradition, the origin of which I have never taken the trouble to solve, ordains that *boudin*, otherwise black-pudding, must be eaten steaming hot. Oh, that mixture! Champagne and black-puddings! It does not get ameliorative till the following afternoon, and then the weary dwellers of Lutetia dream of a steam-crane that could lift their heads from the pillows.

*Mark Tapley
Redivivus.*

M. Bernier, the architect of the Opéra-Comique and member of the Institute, is the most genial-hearted man I ever heard of. It has been discovered that the Opéra-Comique is breaking up, and two dangerous-looking splits can be seen from the street. What says M. Bernier when he is spoken to on the subject? "Certainly," he says, "there are cracks; but what beautiful cracks! A stone was misplaced, and that is all." It is useless to tell him that all other architects regard the gradual collapse of the house as a certainty. He persists in regarding the mistake as a *chef-d'œuvre*. Mark Tapley never went further.

The Play in Paris.

Guitry began his management of the Comédie-Française deplorably with Guiche's "Le Nuage." It was the worst-mounted and the worst-played—excepting Mdlle. Sorel—that I have ever seen. The attempt of Gémier at the Renaissance to imitate his old master, Antoine, in medical plays has failed hopelessly, and the Ambigu, with "La Marchande de Fleurs," has without success attempted to revive the old, very old, peculiarly old, form of pathetic and incoherent melodrama. As a guide to the many hundreds of *Sketch* readers who will adopt the now fashionable craze of spending the Christmas holidays in Paris, I give the following as the most pleasant evenings at their disposal: The Variétés, where the *revue* is splendid; the Nouveautés, with the delightful comedy "Nelly Rozier"; the Folies-Dramatiques, with "Le Billet de Logement"—but this must be taken with discretion; and, as a friendly hint to married men, I would advise them not to take their wives to Olympia, for, after the ladies had seen La Belle Otero in her £60,000 bolero of diamonds and pearls, the husbands could never again content their weaker halves.

*Santos-Dumont to
be Married.*

A little bird tells me these items that it has picked up in its wanderings. Before Santos-Dumont was other than simple Santos-Dumont and not world-famous, he fell in love with the daughter—a very beautiful girl—of the proprietor of one of the most aristocratically frequented hotels in the Quartier Marbeuf. The father liked young Dumont, but, when it was a question of marriage, he said, "You must decide between the two: either you must give up my daughter or your mad ballooning exploits." Santos-Dumont gave up neither one nor the other, and I fancy that now the father would make no opposition to so famous a son-in-law.

*The King in
France.*

The rumoured visit of the King to the Riviera as guest of Lord Rendel is generally regarded as a *ballon d'essai* and as being paid for by the hotel-keepers on the Littoral. These rumours are inevitably followed by the Leyds-subsidised Press with the announcement that Kruger has taken a villa.

*The Promise that
Failed.*

I have very good reason for believing that the elder Coquelin was largely responsible for the stupid outbreak of the Sociétaires at the Français. When Jules Claretie saw that his position was becoming untenable and approached Leygues, with a view to Government support, Coquelin told them that they had only to show their teeth and leave the rest to him. They believed in him, and he whispered to them his project. His influence with the Dramatic Authors' Society was, he said, such as enabled him to induce the whole Society to boycott the National Theatre, and, accordingly, if the artistes *en masse* decided to resign, the Maison

Molière would be without plays or players. This theatrical promise came to the ground at once. More practical men than Parisian playwrights cannot be imagined. Often have I been in the offices of the Society in the Rue Hippolyte Lebas on a Saturday morning, where everything is conducted with the precision of a bank. Cheques representing their royalties are awaiting them, and over a question of a franc they will dispute. It was among such very business-like men that Coquelin thought to throw his picturesque cry of revolt, but his was a voice crying in the wilderness.

*English Plays in
Paris.*

Mr. Edmund Rellaw has arranged a very promising list of plays for his second season of English plays in Paris, and I wish him every success. The production of "His Excellency the Governor" showed a marked improvement on the performances of last year. He played excellently himself, and was well supported by Miss Beverly Sitgreaves, Miss Lavigne, and Mr. Maréchal. Among other plays that I notice on the list are "Sweet and Twenty," "The Liars," "Captain Swift," and "A Fool's Paradise." It is a pity that Mr. Rellaw cannot find a home—say the Mathurins—a little nearer the boulevards.

Miss Bessie Abbott. All Paris is talking of Miss Bessie Abbott, who scored so signal a success in her début as Juliette. The pretty American girl owes her chance in Paris very largely to the influence of Coquelin, whom she met on an Atlantic liner and who was charmed by her voice. A

curious point is that, on the very evening of her first appearance, it was discovered that she had never learnt the mysteries of the hare's-foot, the pencil, the rouge-pot, and grease-paint, and within ten minutes of the rise of the curtain was engaged in doing scroll-work without any definite effect in view. Gailhard, the Director, came to the rescue and acted as her maid.

A KIPLING PARODY.

Munsey's Magazine contains a clever parody on Rudyard Kipling's recent poem. It is entitled "Another Lesson," and the following extract will show that it is not without application to the literary men and methods of the Old as well as the New World—

Not in a single issue, and not in a single book,
But conclusively, comprehensively, and wherever we chance to look,
We see the popular authors struck down by flattery's blight,
And it's jolly well due to the General Public, and it serves us jolly well right!

It's the G.P.'s fault, and its very great fault, and not the judgment of Heaven,
For we've never yet learned that one good book is not valid excuse for seven
Of which the third is worse than the second, and the fourth is worse than the third,
And so down metaphorical stairs to the author's ultimate word.



MISS MADGE LESSING AS "THE BELLE OF NEW YORK,"
AT THE LYRIC THEATRE.

Photo by R. W. Thomas, Cheapside.



CHRISTMAS—1901, NOT OUT.

I AM glad that you are not one of those sidewalk pessimists; my dear Dollie, who believe that Christmas died with Dickens. For Christmas is just as much alive as Tiny Tim, and patient Bob Cratchit, and Scrooge's cheery nephew, and poor old Scrooge himself are alive. If your liver is in good working order, the Christmas punch-bowl smells and tastes every bit as good as it did when Mr. Pickwick brewed it; if your heart is in the right place, the Christmas bells ring out just as merrily as they were wont to do when George the Fourth was King.

You and I, Dollie dear, can afford to snap our fingers at the croakers. Our livers, thanks to our slender purses, are in splendid condition; our hearts, being filled full of love and affection, are warm within us. We regret, perhaps, that the days of stage-coaches are passed; we sometimes pine a little for the Yule-log, and the mummers, and the groups of simple youths and maidens telling ghost-stories around the hall-fire. But we recognise the glad fact that Christmas may be Christmas even if one does not happen to get snowed up or waylaid by bands of masked highwaymen.

The modern Christmas, of course, is an electric-lighted, late-dinnered, printed-card, pictorially anticipated, muggy-weathered kind of affair. There are none of your red noses, or flaming torches, or ringing skates. And yet, you know, there is no doubt that we are able to spend a far more comfortable, and, if it comes to that, a far merrier Christmas than our ancestors ever knew. For how, after all, did my father and your grandfather, dear Dollie, manage to get through Christmas? In the first place, there was this wonderful stage-coach business that we hear so much about and which makes such excellent illustrations in the Christmas Numbers. What did it mean, after all? A twenty-four or forty-eight hour drive on the roof of a lumbering vehicle, with a very good chance of being emptied into the ditch and a certainty of being chilled to the bone. Nowadays, all we have to do is take a swift hansom to the station—hansoms are always

swift, you know, on paper—secure a snug corner-seat in a well-lighted and well-warmed compartment, tuck a rug around our knees, cut the pages of the latest novel, and tumble out at the other end with a delightfully vague uncertainty as to just when and where it was that we dropped off into that peace-induced, rumble-soothed slumber.

Again, some mention was made, I believe, of mummers. When I was a little boy, the mummer idea was just dying out, and had degenerated into scratch bands of juvenile carol-singers. These smirking little

impostors started on their black-mailing rounds somewhere about the first week in December, and continued the evil practice until the early part of January. The troupes used to consist, as a rule, of two blue-nosed little boys and one snivelling little girl. Their repertoire consisted, for the main part, of "While shepherds watched their flocks by night," occasionally varied by a sycophantic and hypocritical lyric that began, "God bless the master of this house, likewise the mistress too." When this number went up, so to speak, the master of the house usually indulged in earnest, deep-breathed expletives, whilst the gude-wife, for her part, would open wide the door and direct the household tyke to "fetch 'em out, then." I, however, together with my brothers and sisters, had more subtle methods of replying to the blessing. Instead of enlisting the services of the dog, we would proceed to conduct the performance in the most approved Sousa style. "Louder! Louder!"

we would cry; "now softly; softer yet; very soft. Now loud again! Go it! Shriek!" until the whole neighbourhood was writhing in nervous agony and the Mince-pie Minstrels were compelled, from sheer exhaustion, to cease from their troubling. At this juncture, my second brother would promptly slam the door and return to his snug corner and roasting chestnuts. He was a hard man.

As regards the death of ghost-stories, it is not that we can't tell 'em nowadays. Goodness me! the recipe is simple enough. Take one old-fashioned country-house and plant it down four miles from anywhere. Into this house introduce a long passage, a disused room, and a foolhardy heroine. Show that the heroine insists on sleeping in the haunted room. Next procure a family legend, slice it into small bits, and stir in a few drops of tincture of love. (Add sauce to taste.) Cook the whole before a dying fire and serve up on Christmas Eve just before the clock strikes twelve. There's a creepy novel for you in a nutshell, so you will agree with me, Dollie dear, that it is not because we can't invent 'em that we have dropped the ghost-story. As a matter of fact, we are a little above all that

sort of thing. It doesn't even deceive the children. Just try, and at the moment that the lady in the white silk dress steps out of the picture and brandishes her poised dagger above the heroine's heart, you will hear Master Willie, aged seven, remark, "What rot!"; whilst Miss Marjorie, aged nine, will reply, "Yes; let's go and play Ping-Pong."

Exit, then, another dispensable feature of the old-fashioned Christmas. The only one that I do regret is the hard frost that our ancestors used to enjoy. They can have all the snow, but it is difficult to feel Christmassy when the rain is falling and the mud flying. One's appetite, too, falls off so in muggy weather, and this becomes quite a serious matter when the turkey is on the table. Christmas-pudding, of course, no one ever can eat except schoolboys and schoolgirls. One merely takes it as a matter of habit and in the hope of getting the ring or the sixpence. Personally, I've no use for the thimble.

After all, however, the best part of Christmas Day is the evening, and then the weather doesn't matter. For the drawn curtains shut out the night, and the drench, drench of the rain and the howling of the wind add considerably to the comfort of being safe and warm inside.

And there is a charm in Christmas night, Dollie dear, that is both time-proof and weather-proof. It is the charm of being with those we hold dear; the charm of knowing that we are loved; above all, the charm of loving. The centuries, dear friend, can never alter that. Christmas will always be Christmas so long as our hearts are in the right place—and our livers in working order.



"While Shepherds watched."



When Mr. Pickwick brewed it;

"Chicest"

CHRISTMAS IN THE THEATRES.

"THE SKETCH" REVIEW OF THE PANTOMIMES AND CHILDREN'S PLAYS.



MISS WINIFRED HARE AS "ALADDIN," AT THE CORONET THEATRE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFRED ELLIS AND WALERY, BAKER STREET, W.

PREPARING THE DRURY LANE PANTOMIME.

THE property-master and his assistants are the "handy men" of the theatre. It is not generally known what a great deal depends upon the nimbleness of their fingers and the applicability of their minds. There is scarcely anything they cannot do in the way of constructive modelling. Almost everything that is required on the stage of a theatre is supplied by the property-man. If the real thing is not

obtainable, or not desired, then a faithful imitation must be produced—an imitation, mark you, that, if it does not actually "take in" the beholder, must secure his admiration for its truthfulness. In short, the property-man is a kind of intellectual *multum-in-parvo*.

A great many theatrical properties are made of papier-mâché. It depends upon the nature of the article. At Drury Lane Theatre, where the accompanying photographs were taken, they have a well-equipped property-room and a large staff. Indeed, they are busy all the year round making



MAKING CLAY MODELS.

something. The process of papier-mâché modelling is very interesting. The first stage is to form a model of the article required in clay, the latter being beaten into workable pliability with a wooden mallet. When the model is complete—and this first stage is not by any means the least skilful of the whole operation—it is treated to a coating of plaster-of-Paris, and a cast obtained. The latter, in its turn, is lined with papier-mâché, the process being a somewhat lengthy one, for the paper is carefully stuck on in thin layers until the required thickness is reached. Then it is removed from the plaster cast, and, being in sections, must be fitted together. This done, it is hung up to dry, and a very strange collection of objects are thus frequently seen in close propinquity—a rabbit ready for the cooking-pot, the head of a horse, a colossal egg, a bunch of grapes, a sea-serpent, a round of beef, a drinking-cup, a policeman's pneumatic truncheon, a head of celery, cabbages, carrots, bladders and kippers, all jumbled up in inextricable confusion.

After the drying come painting, gilding, and silvering. In the first-named the artist must apply many subtle touches of nature which make the whole akin to the real thing. And wonderfully like these models are made. It is quite appetising to gaze upon the representations of a succulent round of beef, a tender and plump-looking chicken, a bunch of juicy grapes, with the very bloom so skilfully introduced, and many other toothsome commodities to memory dear.

When a large model in papier-mâché is made, similar to those shown in the photograph, the plaster cast is necessarily a very heavy affair and takes several men to move it.

If an article is required the like of which is not to be found on the face of the earth—a grotesque and imaginative figure—then a rough design is first sketched on paper, and the model made from this. Pantomime articles are more frequently treated in this way. Most plaster casts are kept in stock for future use.

In addition to the clay and papier-mâché modelling, there is a considerable amount of carpentering and, in the women's department,

needlework to be done. They have also to manipulate metal, and, upon the occasion of my visit to Drury Lane, I was shown an exact model of a Maxim. Everything was complete and full-size, the water-jacket being of brass. It was made workable, and the noise which the real weapon makes when in action was cleverly imitated by turning a small crank at the back.

Many cunning devices are resorted to by the property-man. For instance, in making a basket of eggs, an ordinary wicker arrangement is fitted with a papier-mâché cover representing a pile of eggs. In this cover, however, spaces are left for the introduction of model eggs which can be taken from the bulk at the will of the carrier. This materially assists the illusion.

Trick musical instruments, too, are very effective. A man picks up a carrot on the stage, puts the end to his mouth, blows, and it is a whistle. The model of the carrot is built round the whistle, holes being allowed for notes and mouthpiece. The painting, however, masks these from the eyes of the audience.

In making human heads the artist plays a very important part, being able with his brush to present them old or young, ugly or becoming, with the same foundation. The old "big-head" of pantomime is practically now obsolete, being replaced by a much lighter mask made in three pieces. Masks that at one time weighed ten pounds now scale only two and a-half. There are also half-masks for animal impersonators, such as Mr. Charles Lauri. The mask fixes upon the lower part of the head and works with elastic springs, moving with the movement of the wearer's mouth. The upper part of the face is "made-up" to represent the animal being impersonated.

But perhaps one of the most skilful "properties" ever turned out is the "Blondin donkey." This was first roughly designed on paper, giving details of the interior arrangements. The performer for whom the dress is intended has to be measured in almost the same way as a tailor measures for a suit of clothes. Much depends upon the accuracy of the figures—the length of the back, arms, legs, and girth. The head is made of papier-mâché, and the body of baize, the latter being padded in such a manner that when the wearer dons the dress it is a close fit and there is no room to fall about inside it. The padding also protects the wearer in the case of rough-and-tumble usage. The back-legs of the donkey are worked with the legs of the man, but the front-legs of the animal are fitted with crutches reaching from the feet to the knees. On these crutches the man rests his hands and moves the legs about at will. The mouth, eyes, ears, and tail are worked by means of strings communicating with the man's hands. Other animals are made on similar lines, the elephant requiring two people to work it.

There are many tricks dear to the "knockabout" which make a call upon the ingenuity of the property-man, and in which padded wigs and padded clothing play an important part. One man hits another over the head with a chopper, leaving the latter apparently sticking in his skull. The wig is padded with cork, in which there is a groove that receives the chopper.

But one might go on enumerating like instances of the skill of the property-man for an indefinite period. To put it briefly and comprehensively, he is always equal to any call upon his services.



THE WOMEN'S DEPARTMENT.



FITTING TOGETHER.



PAINTING THE MODELS.



MISS JULIA FRANKS, "PRINCIPAL GIRL" IN "BLUE BEARD," AT DRURY LANE.

(See "Musical and Theatrical Gossip.")

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BASSANO, OLD BOND STREET, W.

SOME HANDSOME "PRINCIPAL BOYS."



MISS MARGARET RUBY,
In "The Forty Thieves," at the Theatre Royal, Newcastle.
Photo by Laugher, Old Bond Street, W.



MISS SOPHIE HARRISS,
In "The Babes in the Wood," at Theatre Royal, Bournemouth.
Photo by Hana, Bedford Street, Strand.



MISS IDA LAWRENCE,
Principal Danseuse at the Grand Theatre, Fulham.
Photo by Mayall, Kingston-on-Thames.



MISS KATIE CAMERON,
In "The Babes in the Wood," at Theatre Royal, Plymouth.
Photo by H. Yeo, Plymouth.



MISS OLIVE MARSTON,
In "Sinbad the Sailor," at the Grand Theatre, Fulham.
Photo by Lafayette, London and Dublin.



MISS CORA DUNCAN,
In "The House that Jack Built," Grand Theatre, Nottingham.
Photo by Hana, Bedford Street, Strand.



MISS ADA BLANCHE,
In "The Babes in the Wood," at Prince's Theatre, Manchester.
Photo by Ellis and Watery, Baker Street, W.



MISS ELAINE RAVENSBURG,
In "Blue Beard," at Drury Lane Theatre.
Photo by Hana, Bedford Street, Strand.



MISS GEORGIE MARTIN,
In "Aladdin," at the London Hippodrome.
Photo by Chancellor, Dublin.

SOME PRETTY "PRINCIPAL GIRLS."



MISS MABEL LOVE,
In "The Sleeping Beauty," at Grand Opera House, Belfast.
Photo by Sarony, New York.



MISS QUEENIE LEIGHTON,
In "Robin Hood," at the Grand Theatre, Leeds.
Photo by Esmé Collings, Bond Street, W.



MISS GIPSY WOOLF,
In "The Talisman of Gold," at the Britannia Theatre.
Photo by Reed, West Strand.



MISS MARIE DAINTON,
In "Dick Whittington," at the Camden Theatre.
Photo by Harold Baker, Birmingham.



MISS RAE ROSENTHAL,
In "Little Tom Tit," at Royal Artillery Theatre, Woolwich.
Photo by Hana, Bedford Street, Strand.



MISS KATIE VESFY,
In "Dick Whittington," at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow.
Photo by Hana, Bedford Street, Strand.



MISS GEORGIE CORLASS,
In "Aladdin," at the Opera House, Leicester.
Photo by Debenham, York.



MISS LILY LANDON,
In "Aladdin," at the London Hippodrome.
Photo by Chalkley Gould and Co., Southampton.

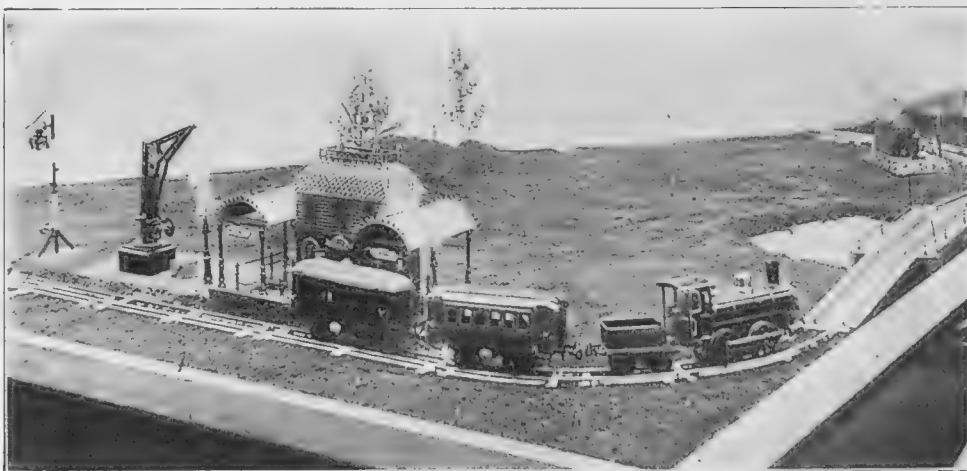


MISS RITA EVERARD,
In "Sweet Red Riding Hood," at the Princess of Wales's
Theatre, Kennington.

THE CHILDREN'S EXHIBITION AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

CHRISTMAS is the one season of the year when the Crystal Palace can defy competition and can draw all the children from town and country under the shelter of its great glass roof, and this success is due to the Management's wise determination to devote the Christmas programme to the little ones. In too many places, London secures the children under false pretences, gives music-hall entertainment the name of pantomime, and offers much that children cannot understand, though it may amuse their parents and guardians. At the Crystal Palace, on the other hand, the requirements of the children dictate the Christmas programme and nothing that they will not care for is to be found.

This year, while there is to be a Circus, a Pantomime, and a very big Christmas-tree, there is another attraction that will prove a serious rival to the old-established institutions. It is a Children's Exhibition in which everything associated with the wonderful period of life called childhood may be seen and admired. This Exhibition, which is being held in the Galleries, so as to leave the Central Transept free for the Circus and the North Nave free for skating, is a very comprehensive



A GERMAN TOY: RAILWAY WITH STATION, SIGNAL-BOXES, VIADUCT, ETC.

books, containing all the most delightful stories from fairyland that were ever set down for nursery reading. After the Toy Section, I expect the books will be most in favour with the young patrons of the Exhibition.

Section Number Two is divided into two parts. The first is quite satisfactory, and takes the form of a model nursery, showing exactly what ought to be there and where it should be. For the second part of Section Two there is, I fear, very little favour in store. Only the Management's undertaking to show everything connected with childhood can excuse the presence of such an exhibit. It is a model school-room. Now, a school-room is out of place at every holiday-time, and so particularly out of place during the Christmas holidays that it is quite impossible to say a good word for it.

Perhaps the attractions of the Exhibition's Third Section will atone for the shortcomings of the latter half of the Second, for Section Three is devoted to the late Queen, and there is a Victoria Room, with the doll's-house that the Queen used to play with in days when few people thought she would come to the Throne of Great Britain, a bedstead on which she slept when no more than a very little girl, many illustrations of her favourite dolls, and some of the clothes she wore when a child. Altogether, this Third Section will be found full of interest and will attract a good deal of attention from children and grown-ups alike. There are many other curious exhibits, and a word should be said of the portrait-gallery of pretty children, which, naturally enough, comprises some of the most attractive features in the Crystal Palace.

Altogether, the Children's Exhibition, which opened on the 9th, when Sousa brought his band to Sydenham for the day,



VICTORIA ROOM, SHOWING THE QUEEN'S DOLL'S-HOUSE.

From Photographs by Russell, Crystal Palace.

undertaking. It includes an International Toy Fair, with French, German, Austrian, and Italian sections, showing how the art of toy-making has advanced in the past few years, and exhibiting the very latest wonders in the shape of mechanical toys. France has sent laughing babies, uniformed policemen, travellers, soldiers, Chinamen; toy motor-cars that

can race along a road, and other wonderful things too numerous to mention. Germany sends a model railway, with passenger-trains, goods-trains, stations, electric signals, and all the other things connected with an up-to-date train service; she also sends submarine-boats and air-ships. From Austria come some mechanical acrobats whose work is surprisingly dainty, a wonderful monkey-nurse, and two small bears, very much alive, that perform on drum and tambourine. Italy sends some of the curious native work one sees in the cathedrals and at wayside shrines and chapels, cardboard figures set on a plaster-of-Paris foundation, and two landscapes worked in cork.

There are military toys of all sorts, shapes, and sizes; there are splendid dolls, and an open competition in doll-dressing, with substantial prizes for the winners; there is a section devoted entirely to children's

is one of the most promising novelties in the way of entertainment that has been undertaken for a long time, and, while it may be confidently expected to delight the little ones, it will give their parents many new and most valuable ideas that must make for the children's increased comfort and happiness. Perhaps, on this ground, even the school-room finds a justification.

Needless to say, all the experts and other people who have given long study to the subject of children's well-being have been consulted, and nothing has been forgotten that makes their work complete. Taken in connection with the usual Christmas attractions of the Crystal Palace, it makes a wonderful entertainment; it is safe to say that no other establishment in Great Britain has catered for the little ones more generously or so wisely. To find a novel idea and develop it on novel lines is far from easy; but Mr. Gillman has succeeded in his undertaking, and the thanks of the children will not be the least part of his reward.



AN AUSTRIAN TOY.



A FRENCH TOY.



MISS JULIE MACKAY, WHO PLAYS THE PRINCE IN "THE SLEEPING BEAUTY," AT BELFAST.

(See "Musical and Theatrical Gossip.")

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY DURHAM, LTD, LEEDS.

THE LONDON PANTOMIMES: A GUIDE IN BRIEF.

THE Good Fairy Pantomimia has once again appeared in our midst to cause by the waving of her wand all sorts and sizes of Christmas and other holiday shows to arise from the bowels of the earth—or rather, of the stage. In former days this beneficent Fairy was wont to call forth also Merry Old Clown from those mysterious hiding-places where he conceals himself for some nine months of the year. This time, however, apart from the fact that several of the Yuletide shows will be Clownless Fairy-plays, the good old-fashioned harlequinades, or “comic scenes,” as they were wont to be professionally called, will be, as a certain old-time observer said, “conspicuous by their absence.” Indeed, I grieve to find that the “high-toney” attitude adopted by the precocious youngsters who nowadays take their parents to the play—instead of their parents taking them—is permeating alike the suburbs and the provinces. So much so that, even where a harlequinade is graciously tolerated at all, it is “only a very little one,” like the baby apologised for in one of Marryat’s ozonic narratives. In some theatres this year there will, indeed, be no pantomime or Christmassy show at all! These pantomimeless playhouses include the Lyceum (where “Sherlock Holmes” still so successfully rules, thanks chiefly to Mr. Gillette’s splendid acting), the Camberwell Métropole (where “San Toy” will be the attraction), and even the Shoreditch Standard, where a play—namely, that lurid melodrama, “The Worst Woman in London”—will supplant pantomime for the first time there for nearly half-a-century.

And now for the pantomimes that will be. First and foremost, of course, comes Old Drury, where the Boxing Night production of the “Annual” has long been an historic event. Here “Blue Beard,” absurdly regarded by professional old-timers as always an “unlucky” pantomime, is the subject chosen. Manager Arthur Collins, part-author with Mr. J. Hickory Wood (whose “Hickory” was bestowed upon him by a facetious editor), has, as is his wont, gathered together the best Company that could be found for love or money—or both. At the head is funny little Mr. Leno (the King’s Jester), who will enact the character of the more or less patient charmer, Sister Anne. As far as the heavy rehearsals have gone up to the moment of writing, this true humorist promises to be even more humorous than hitherto, which is a high trial. Mr. Herbert Campbell (who lately told me he will anon retire from the stage and take his “cup of tea” in calmness) will be found a burly but blithe Blue Beard, although in the Haunted Chamber of Horrors scene he will have much to undergo, moreover, especially as regards those Awful Heads. Miss Elaine Ravensberg is, as last year, “principal boy” (Selim this time), Miss Julia Franks (quite a new-comer) “principal girl” (Fatima), and Miss Madge Girdlestone (who was the majestic young adventuress in “The Great Millionaire”) will be “second boy” (Abdallah by name). The other principals include the statuesque Mr. Lawrence Caird, who plays Hassarac; the droll Mr. Fred Emney, as Mustapha; and those clever Surrey clowns and “knockabouts,” Mr. Arthur Conquest and Little Zola. Mr. Conquest is the youngest acting son of the late George Conquest, but Little Zola is, I can assure you, no relation to his grimmer namesake, the great Zola.

Old Drury’s big scenes will be found very big indeed, especially the Hall of Pleasure, the Magic Staircase, and a really wonderful “set” called the Land of Ferns. Not the least brilliant of these scenes will be that representing “The Fairies’ Gift to Fatima,” doubtless because she has not, like so many young ladies, “lost her head.” When this scene has faded from your view, prepare to find Old Clown (as once more impersonated by Mr. Whimsical Walker) dashing on to exclaim “Here we are again!” and to commit sundry comic crimes.

A highly hilarious, albeit harlequinadeless, pantomime is, that which Mr. H. E. Moss, J.P., will present at the London Hippodrome, where his bust in bronze now adorns the vestibule. This pantomime has been written by Mr. W. H. Risque (author of “Tally Ho!”) and has been set to music by Mr. Carl Kiefert. The “production” is the work of Mr. Frank Parker, the resident stage-manager, and it will be finely cast.

The only other pantomime proper in the West-End circuit is that provided by Mr. E. G. Saunders at the beautiful Coronet Theatre, Notting Hill, now one of our most fashionable playhouses. Here the sprightly Aladdin (as represented by the handsome Miss Winifred Hare) will be found, among other wonderful places, in a most wonderful Cherry Garden with a number of cherry-trees full of beautiful blossoms.

Mr. Saunders has confessed to me that this picturesque scene was “inspired” to some extent by an effective but far less delightful scene put on at his theatre by the Jap tragedians, Otojiro Kawakami and Sada Yacco and Co. The Cave of Jewels will also be a wondrous affair, and the Palace scene, where the Princess (Miss Hetty Dene), Aladdin’s Mother (Mr. James Blakeley), the Wicked Abanazar (funny Mr. James Schofield), and the Emperor (Mr. Pictou Roxborough, the tallest man on the stage) disport, will be found a most gorgeous dwelling. One of the biggest effects will be Aladdin’s Balloon, which in certain respects can give points to Santos-Dumont’s flying-machine. The book of this pantomime is by Mr. Fred Bowyer, the old-time song-writer, and the music by Clarence Corri.

Mr. Saunders has also prepared a grand pantomime for the Camden Theatre. For this the “Dick Whittington” legend has been selected. The libretto is also by Mr. Bowyer and the music partly by Mr. Corri and partly by Mr. Nurnberger. Dick will be played by the clever actress, Miss Marie Dainton, who may be relied upon to give some of her celebrated imitations in the Palace scene. Dick’s sweetheart, Alice, will be impersonated by Miss Lily Elsie, a young actress quite new to London, but already very popular in the North of these Islands. Messrs. Maitland, Marler, and George Gray (the latter just returned again from the “halls”) will be the principal comedians, but the big “star” of the show will be Signor Ugo Biondi, who has been specially engaged to give his wondrous quick-changes.

A grand “Aladdin” pantomime has been provided by Mr. F. W. Purcell at that popular Northern playhouse, the Alexandra, Stoke Newington. “Aladdin,” brought by Mr. C. F. Williams from Plymouth and “produced” by Mr. Victor Stevens, will also be the Surrey’s pantomime this year. It has a fine cast.

Like Old Drury, the Crystal Palace will have a “Blue Beard” pantomime, which, instead of being, like most pantomimes, far too long, will be got through in two hours, so that juvenile playgoers may have time to patronise the fine Circus in the same vast building. “Sinbad the Sailor” (full of mirth-making comedians and with the dashing East-End favourite, Miss Marie Kendall, as the hero) has been selected by the veteran “producer,” Mr. Isaac Cohen, for the Pavilion Theatre, Mile End—a playhouse which, for the general gorgeousness and cost of its *mise-en-scène*, is not inaptly termed “The Drury Lane of the East.” There is also a fine “Sinbad” pantomime at Mr. A. F. Henderson’s popular Thames-side

theatre—the Grand, Fulham—where many leading favourites will delight the playgoers of that neighbourhood.

At the Kennington Theatre, Mr. Robert Arthur has a “Red Riding Hood” pantomime, in which he proudly asserts that he has eschewed the usual extravagant knockabout and “red-nosed” low-comedy business, and has arranged for his resident librettist, Mr. Walter Summers, and his composer, Mr. Jullien Wilson, to run the piece, as far as possible, on dainty comic-opera lines.

“Cinderella,” usually the most plentifully selected of pantomime subjects, is this year chosen for only four suburban playhouses, namely, the Grand, Islington, where Mr. Harry Randall will be the chief comedian; the West London (formerly the old Marylebone); the Terriss Theatre, Rotherhithe; and the Walthamstow Theatre, which is the first existing house to be called “The King’s,” although Mr. J. B. Mulholland long ago contemplated giving that Royal title to his forthcoming new theatre at Hammersmith. There is one other “Dick Whittington,” namely, at the Shakespeare, Clapham, with Miss Marie Loftus (mother of Miss “Cecilia”) as the hero; two “Puss-in-Boots” shows—at the Brixton and the Opera House, Crouch End, to wit; three “Babes in the Wood” pantomimes—at the Borough, Stratford, the Dalston, and the Crown, Peckham; a couple of “Robinson Crusoes,” at the County Theatre, Kingston, and the Elephant and Castle respectively; and one “Little Tom Tit,” namely, at the Artillery Theatre, Woolwich.

At the big Britannia Theatre, where every Monday or Monday week before Christmas the audience pelts the players with useful articles, either of wearing apparel or for the Christmas Dinner-table, there is again an original pantomime. This time it is called “Hanky Panky,” and will, of course, be full of those melodramatic features popular at that enormous Hoxton playhouse. The half-dozen or so of fairy-plays have been treated elsewhere in *The Sketch*. H. CHANCE NEWTON.



MISS ISA BOWMAN AS A PANTOMIME “PRINCIPAL BOY.”

Photo by Chancellor, Dublin.



DARBY AND JOAN.

DRAWN BY CECIL ALDIN.



THE SPENDTHRIFT'S CHRISTMAS.

DRAWN BY ROBERT SAUBER.



"THE SKETCH" CHRISTMAS GIRL.

DRAWN BY DUDLEY HARDY.



PHILOSOPHY.

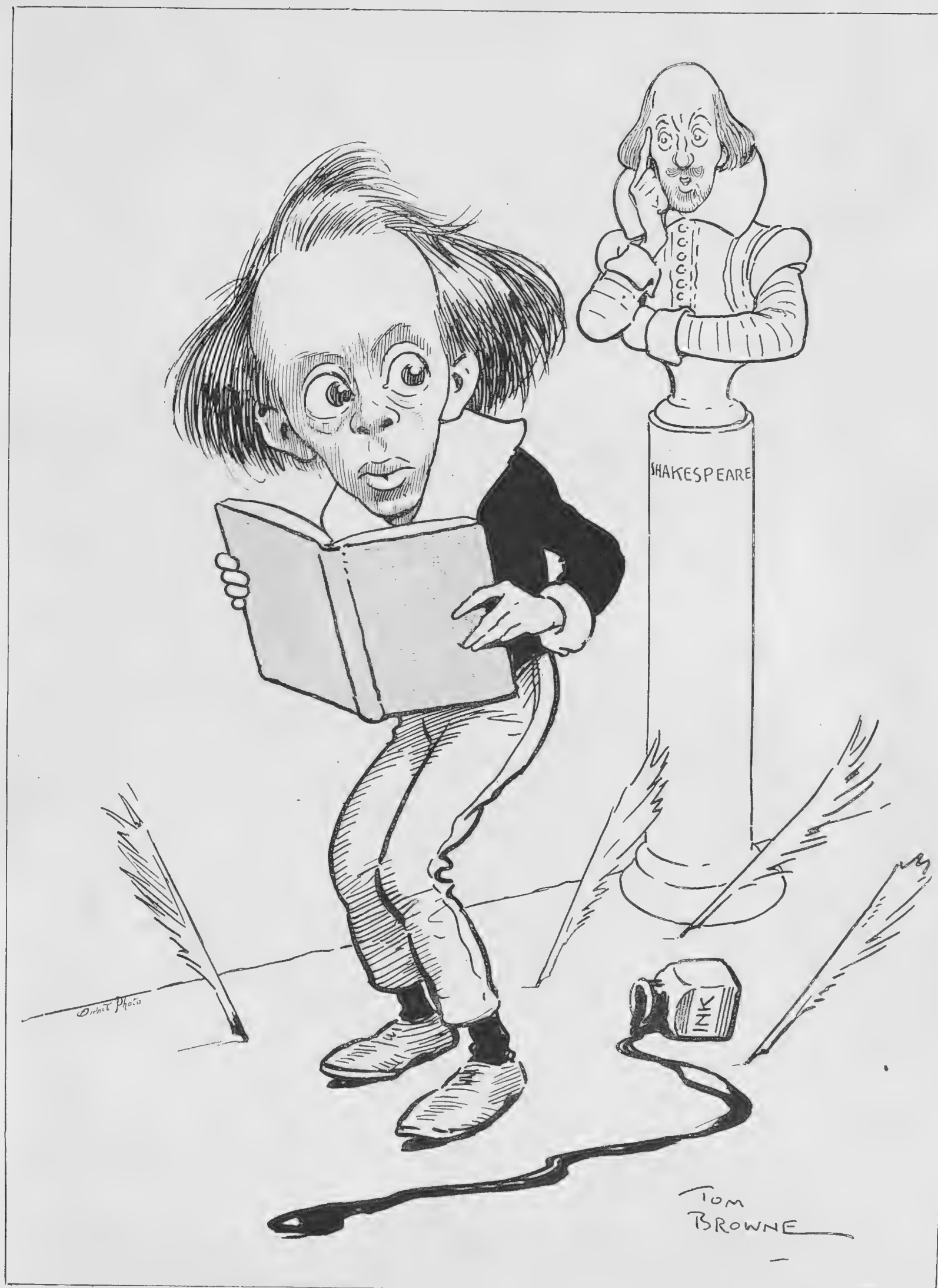
DRAWN BY CECIL ALDIN.

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"IN THE DAYS OF THEIR YOUTH."

A SERIES OF BIOGRAPHICAL CARICATURES BY TOM BROWNE.



A NOVEL IN A NUTSHELL.

HIS PIPE OF TOBACCO.

A CHRISTMAS STORY BY CLO. GRAVES.



CHRISTMAS DAY dawned on Hilyard in a Boer prison. Sun, smell, and sickness, scant food and tattered clothing, were the portion of the twenty-four prisoners—the living remnant of the cavalry escort of a convoy with supplies, attacked and captured by an overwhelming force of Boers, twelve miles north-east of Vanderkemp, on the Huits River, some three months previously.

The jail was a long, low building of corrugated iron, enclosed within a niched stockade surrounded by a trench through which the town-drain ran, this being in its savoury turn bordered by barbed wire. Sentries patrolled here, and the click of the Mauser breech proclaimed the vigilance of the dirty-handed Transvaalers who mounted guard in the courtyard within the stockade.

The English soldiers within the jail were treated like felons. In cells, nine feet long by five feet wide, ventilated by one small grating, they were packed together, six in a pen. At night they lay on the mud floor, their officer having been voted the one filthy straw-mattress which had been left in the cell he shared with five troopers of his squadron, by some previous occupant. And upon it Hilyard awakened from a dream of home on Christmas morning.

Rheumatism racked him; his stiffened joints seemed of cast-iron. He groaned and lifted his head, and the hot sunshine poured in through the barred ventilation-trap high in the iron wall, and revealed the foul squalor and misery of the place, and the pitiable rags and dismal tatters of five unwashed and unshaven captives huddled in strange attitudes on the muddy floor, most of them snoring hideously.

"Peace on Earth to men of goodwill!" said Hilyard, with a smile. "We shall have some Dutch hymn-singing to-day to make things lively."

A kick made the door—of corrugated iron, like the walls and roof—start and rattle.

"'Tis Beauty wid the breakfast!" said an Irish voice behind Hilyard. "Come in, darlin, an' sarve us our tay in bed!"

A padlock screeched out of the staple, and "Beauty," a Boer whose extreme hideousness was a theme for comment among even his fellow-countrymen, came in with the breakfast. "You English swine, wake up!"

"'Tis worth wakin' for," said the voice behind Hilyard, "av 'twas only to see the sight av your purty face, agra!"

The jailer spat upon the floor in contempt and put down the tin dishes he carried. There were six of them, each containing one pound of mealie-meal porridge. A small tin pan, containing some lumps of coarse, unpurified salt, was added for the seasoning of the repast, and a bucket of water crowned it. Then the jailer spat again, grunted contemptuously, and went out. The door crashed to after him, the padlock scraped in the staple. Hilyard and his men, with sick stomachs and aching bones, sat up to eat their loathsome meal. The Irishman brought him his, and a little salt pounded on a flat stone, with some brown, ill-smelling water in the only tin cup the cell boasted.

They looked, in the stream of sunshine that fell athwart them as they sat over their tin dishes, like dead men galvanised into a ghastly mockery of the social act of eating. Their unkempt hair and livid, bluish faces gave them the aspect of ghouls. The brownish rags of the tattered Service kit fluttered about their wasted bodies. A metal number shone here and there, polished by friction; a tiny strip of ribbon on sleeve or collar showed, yet unfaded and unsmirched, the distinguishing badge of the Orange Hussars. Some of the men, sickened by the miserable mixture, made little pretence of eating; others bolted the rank porridge with the fierce avidity of hungry hounds. A darker gloom than usual brooded on their haggard faces, where the lines dug by shame, impotent suffering, and privation were deepened by a bitter knowledge. It was Christmas Day!

"I wonder if they knows at 'ome as wot we've bin copped?" said one man, a sharp, alert Londoner, with the twang of Kentish Town, between gulps of the dirty water with which he closed his meal.

"Sure to! Why, you bloomin' looney," said another, "wot are despatches for, an' telegraph-orffices, an' noosepapers, if they don't know?"

"The Correspondent wot got permission to accomp'ny the convoy got shot," said the first. "I seen 'im bleedin' like a stuck swine alongside the track. 'E looked like a man wot 'ad 'ad 'is gruel—an' you knows 'ow many o' the rest o' our chaps got back to Bloemdorp to tell the story of 'ow the train got 'eld up.'"

He made an O with his thumb and finger and dismally winked through it at the other man.

"We conjecture as wot the escort wosn't noomerically strong enough to cope with the marauders, seein' as none of our troopers 'ave yet returned." The speaker adopted the nasal sing-song of an official quoting from despatches. "It may be taken for granted, 'owever, as

'ow No. 4823 Trooper Snitchey be'aved with 'is usual reckless gallantry dooring the haction. We 'ear on good authority that 'is grandmother is to receive a special medal for gallantry in the field——"

"You leave my grandmother be," said Trooper Snitchey, scowling furiously at the jester, "or I shall 'ave to 'urt my knuckles agin that ugly 'ead o' yourn. I can stand your chin on other days, but"—he shook his head and swallowed something and scowled more fiercely than before—"not on this day!"

"Wot's the matter with you to-day?" queried Ginger.

"There's nothing more the matter with me to-day," explained Trooper Snitchey, "than wot there is on other days. I'm 'oused like a Kaffir's dorg, I'm fed like a Kaffir's dorg, an' I'm ready to bite like a Kaffir's dorg—when I gits the chaunce—an' to run like one. It's the day there's something the matter with. Don't you know it's——?" He turned to Hilyard. "It's Christmas Day, sir, accordin' to my reckoning—December the 25th."

"Yes," said Hilyard, in low, hurried tones, "it's Christmas Day!"

"My old grandmother—'er wot Ginger was a-gassing about just now—she sends us a puddin' an' a goose from the country every Christmas. I don't know," said Trooper Snitchey hospitably, "'oo's a-going to 'ave my share, but I wish it may disagree with 'im!"

"Beg pard'n, sir! Can you tell us the difference o' time between South Africa an' England?" The jester of the company addressed his question to the officer.

"I hardly remember," said Hilyard vaguely. "Two hours, I believe. Oh yes, of course; two hours!" A sickness of despair came over him, a cold sweat broke out upon his body. He clenched his teeth to keep back curses or sobs, he could not have told which.

"My Gawd!" said Trooper Snitchey; "suppose it only took two 'ours to get 'ome!"

"They'll be afther bringin' us our foddher at twelve av the clock," said the Irishman, who had been sitting huddled in the darkest corner as he muttered rapidly to himself and clicked a worn string of wooden beads hurriedly through his gaunt fingers. "Raw ox, steeped in warrum wather, an' a block av baked sawdust for each man that can get ut down. 'Tis an insult to the mimory av the boiled bacon and greens I would be ating this day at Lisnavore, to say nothing av the potheen an' whisky that would be afther washin' ut down. Lashins an' lavins there'd be, an' what would be left, me fadher—God be good to the ould boy!—would be distributin' amongst the poor forninst the door."

The most miserable and listless of the listless, miserable six was roused and interested now.

"I never 'ad no 'ome," he said, "'cept the Gordon Boys', an' there aint no better 'ome than wot that is. I can see the 'olly 'anging up in the dormitories now, an' smell the plum-duff bilin' in the Mess coppers, an' 'ear the Band practisin' 'The Roast Beef of Old England,' wot they allus played when the real roast beef come in. An' I wish I wos back there now—that's wot I wishes—'stead o' sittin' starvin' in this kennel!"

His voice broke with self-pity.

"I was 'ungry when you began to jor," said a man whose lips were black and cracking and whose teeth chattered despite the fierce sun-rays which smote on the corrugated-iron roof, peevishly. "I'm 'ungrier now, an' thirsty as well. Give us the bucket over 'ere." He drank eagerly and yet with disgust, spilling water upon his lean body from his shaking hands, and then lay down groaning.

His companions knew the symptoms of the prison-fever, and, though there was no pity in the hollow eyes of the comrade who thrust a tattered, rolled-up coat under the head of the man who had spilled the water, each said "Poor devil!" in his heart.

"It 'ud be easier to 'old up against," said Trooper Snitchey, addressing nobody in particular, "if there was such a thing as a plug o' smoke to be 'ad. One pipe amongst the 'arf-dozen of us! A whiff apiece. . . . My Gawd! An' them stinkin' Dutchie outside chawin' an' smokin', an' smokin' an' chawin', from mornin' till night!"

As though in confirmation of the speaker's words, a faint blue cloud rose outside the ventilator and the aroma of tobacco became increasingly perceptible. The sentry had lighted his pipe.

"Whin honest men," broke in the Irishman, "would swop a year av life—life at its swatest—for wan shaugh at a black dhudeen stuffed wid nagurhead. 'Tis bitter—bitter!"

"I've 'ad a try at sev'ral different kinds o' 'ungers," said Ginger, who was moralist as well as jester. "There's the 'unger for glory, combined with a smart uniform wot'll make the gals stare out o' their bloomin' heyes, as drives a man to 'list. There's the 'unger for kisses an' canoodlin', wot drives yer to want to please the gals. There's the 'unger for revenge, wot drives yer to bash in a bloke's face an' loses you yer stripes if 'e 'appens to be a Corp'ril. Then there's the 'unger to get under cover when you're bein' sniped, an' the 'unger for blood when you've got Johnny Dutchy at close quarters an' the

lances are flickerin' in and out o' the dirty great-coats like Jimmy O! There's the 'unger for freedom, when you're shut up in a stinkin' cattle-pen like this 'ere as a prisoner-o'-war. There's the 'unger for grub you can't get—that's bad enough; an' the 'unger for liquor, wot's worse. But the worst 'unger of all is the 'bacey 'unger; an' when I think o' the bales bein' opened now, full o' cigars an' cigarettes an' pipes an' pouches an' tins o' prime smokin'-mixture labelled 'For the Soldiers at the Front' . . . I could pretty well cry!"

"Men," said Hilyard, sitting up with a struggle and looking round at the dirty, hopeless faces, and the gaunt, starved figures of his fellow-captives, "I have an admission to make to you. We have shared and shared alike, so far, save in one particular"—he flushed as he looked down at the filthy mattress that interposed between his body and the filthier earthen floor—"but from the worst days there has been something which I have kept to myself." He fumbled with a shaking hand in the bosom of his dirty khaki tunic and brought out something long hidden between the lining and the stuff. "You see, it's a new pipe," he said, with a last weak effort; "full of tobacco, as you see. Take it and smoke it between you; but read the writing on the slip of paper first—mind you give it back to me afterwards, though—and you'll understand why I—" He lay down and turned his face to the wall in silence. Eager voices rose up about him; the pipe was handed from one to another, smelt at, worshipped, dandled by each in turn.

"Blessed Saints!" came from the Irishman, breaking the silence; "let me hould ut in me hands!"

"Spell out the writin' on the slip of paper round the bowl, Ginger," ordered Trooper Snitchey.

Ginger deciphered, with moving lips and anxious eyes: "'I—hope—you—will—enjoy—this—pipe—darling—I—filled—it—myself—Alice.'"

"Is gal!" telegraphed Trooper Snitchey.

The intelligence volted from one to another, until, the circuit of the cell complete, every eye turned on the motionless figure of Hilyard.

"Filled ut herself wid her own blesed little finger! . . . Mary help her, the poor young crayture!" crooned the Irishman. They consulted one another with a glance, and, though there was not a mouth that did not water for the luxury, Hilyard was roused by the pipe being, not ungently, thrust back into his hand.

"Take ut back, sorr! What would wan pipe be among six starvin' Amalekites? A dhrup in the ocean!"

"Wot's one suck, or even two, to a starvin' bloke? Wot I wants is to find a 'bacea-factory afire an' put my mouth to the chimbley-shaft!"

"Take it back, sir!" they chorussed.

"Thank you, men," said Hilyard, brokenly. "If ever we get out of this infernal place alive, I'll stand you a three-pound tin apiece of the best tobacco that's to be had, in remembrance of this day."

By noon of the next day the dirty little Boer town was in the hands of the English, the commando garrisoning it had fled, and the prisoners were free. Two months later, Hilyard landed from a King's transport-ship at Southampton Docks. A few hours more—and he was in London.

The pipe was in his inner breast-pocket, but a great anxiety was in the heart that beat against it. He had cabled and written to

his promised wife to announce the news of his delivery from captivity, of his speedy return on leave from "the Front"—but had received no answer. Perhaps she had written! If so, the letter must travel all the way back to England, to reach Hilyard, with its happy welcome, long after reunion with the writer. He could bear the disappointment *now*, when a fast hansom was carrying him to Gloucester Gate, when a few minutes more, perhaps, would give Alice to his arms again.

"This 'ouse? No. 00?" said the cabman huskily through the roof-trap. "The number you gev' me, but there's a board up 'To Let.'" The blankness of disappointment visible in Hilyard's face made him add, "If I was you, sir, I'd ring an' question the caretaker. Per'aps she knows the family's new address."

And Hilyard rang the servants' bell, and a dingy woman came to the door.

"The family left three months ago," she said, and wiped her eyes, which were quite dry, with her dingy apron. "No, they didn't leave no address; they left in a 'urry. One of the two young ladies died, an' after the funeral the other took 'er Mar away abroad, both being cut up that dreadful about the death. Which of the two young ladies? The youngest it was, an' a sweet, pretty dear! An' all the furniture's stored, an' I'm quite certain as I never 'card where they'd gone, except just generally the mention of abroad; but the cemetery where the young lady was buried was Hlighwood—an' I'm told no expense was spared . . . an' such a beautiful sculptured monument bespoke that it wouldn't be ready, the undertaker's man told my niece, for six months to come . . ."

Hilyard thrust a sovereign into the woman's hand and stumbled down the steps. "Hlighwood Cemetery!" he said to the cabman, and the cabman muttered, "'It 'ard, pore bloke!" as he whipped up his horse.

It was a long drive to Hlighwood Cemetery, but they got there before the great gates closed for the day, and a man in black with a red nose consulted a register and found the name and told Hilyard to come this way.

And presently they were standing by a grave, with a board at the head of it on which a number was painted, and the custodian was repeating the caretaker's story about the expensive monument that would not be ready for six months to come. His hand was ready for Hilyard's money, and at Hilyard's request he shambled away and left him alone.

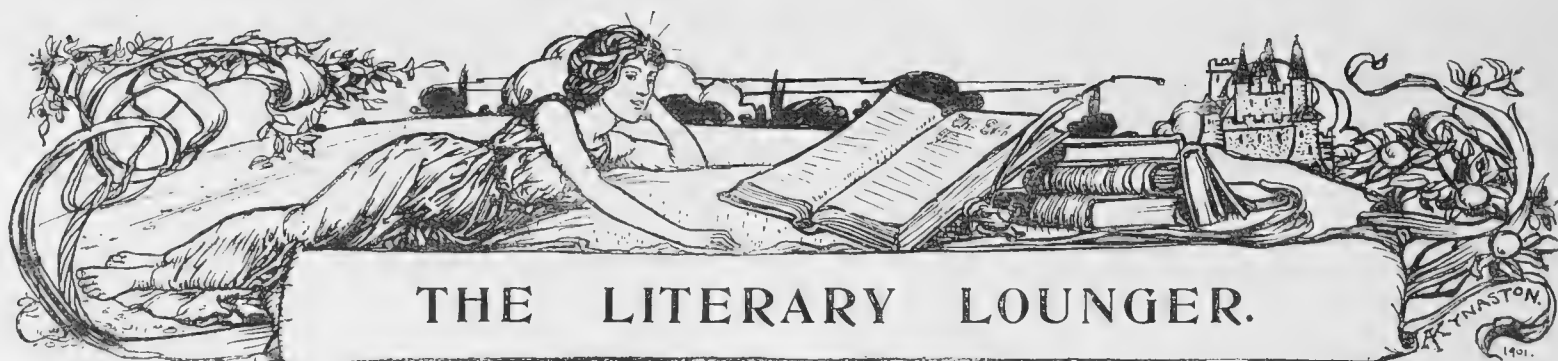
The grave was beautifully green already, and a wreath of hothouse flowers, not quite faded, lay upon it. Hilyard had not the slightest doubt as to who lay beneath. He reproached her, but only once.

"Oh, Alice! you might have waited until I came home!" he said. Then he took two things out of his pockets—the untouched, unsmoked pipe, with the slip of paper round it, and a Mauser revolver, loaded. He meant to smoke that pipe out and then follow Alice. He knew it was wicked, but things had been too rough. He could not bear any more.

So he lighted the pipe. The tobacco was very dry and burned quickly: there was nothing in the bowl but ash in a few minutes. Then he knocked out the ashes and put the pipe back in his pocket, and took up the revolver. But a voice he knew cried out his name, and, with a terrible shock of joy, he saw the living, loving Alice standing near him, dressed in mourning, and holding a wreath of white flowers in her hand.



But a voice he knew cried out his name, and, with a terrible shock of joy, he saw the living, loving Alice standing near him, dressed in mourning, and holding a wreath of white flowers in her hand.



THROUGH THE LEAVES.

MR. T. C. EVANS, who was intimately connected with Dickens during his American tours, has been publishing some interesting reminiscences. The following letter from Dickens to a young writer is, I think, new and certainly characteristic—

God's Hill Place, Higham by Rochester, Kent; Tuesday, Aug. 16, 1859.

DEAR SIR,—I return you herewith the proofs of the opening of your story. I think the story evinces a great deal of promise and a great deal of power. If I may venture to take the liberty of offering you two pieces of advice, they are these—

1. Never to be afraid of being pathetic when any tenderness naturally arises in you out of the situation, and never to regard it as a kind of weakness that needs to be jested away or otherwise atoned for.

2. Not too pettily and perseveringly to urge to the utmost any humorous little extravagance. I think the dog should not open his mouth so very wide in barking as to show the whole of his internal mechanism, and the same kind of objection strikes me in reference to the spelling of some of the noises made, both by men and beasts.

These are slight remarks, and they in no way affect my honest opinion that you begin exceedingly well—with force, with interest, and with character.—
Faithfully yours, CHARLES DICKENS.

Mr. Richard Marsh has a dangerous rival in the rate of production in Mr. Robert Chambers, the author of that capital novel, "Cardigan," recently published on this side of the water by Messrs. Constable and Co. Mr. Chambers began writing in 1893, and has published in seven years no less than fifteen books. And some of them have been quite good books, too.

Count Tolstoy's recent illness seems to have been greatly exaggerated. Private advices from Odessa state that the malarial fever from which he has suffered has entirely ceased to trouble him, and his strength is returning in a remarkable degree. Tolstoy is at present engaged on a work the nature of which he refuses to impart to anyone. He considers it inexpedient and unlikely to serve any good purpose to acquaint the reading public with the work, and gives the conviction of this as his reason why he preserves such profound secrecy in regard to it. Some months ago it was noised abroad that the work on which Count Tolstoy was engaged just before his illness, entitled "The Corpse," would shortly appear in print, and an outline of the main features of the work was published in certain quarters. It is now stated, however, that "The Corpse" has not yet been finished, and that certain circumstances render it probable that it will not be published for some time, if at all.

The correspondence of George Sand will be published shortly in Paris, and is sure to create the liveliest interest. Madame Maurice Sand, who recently died, spent many years in the arrangement and selection of the correspondence of her famous mother-in-law. It is said that the letters, many of them from Victor Hugo, Sainte-Beuve, and other giants of the time, number thousands, and filled the desks, cupboards, and shelves of George Sand's house. The correspondence with De Musset and Chopin, however, will not appear. The De Musset family obtained an injunction from the Court to prevent publication, and the Chopin correspondence was burned. The story is that Dumas *filis* found the latter in an inn in Poland, bought it for a few louis, and returned it to George Sand, who received it with the utmost calm and threw each letter into the fire.

The two literary discoveries of the year are Captain Grant, who, it is now generally admitted, is "Linesman," the author of the remarkable "Words by an Eye-witness," to which I have already referred in this column, and George Douglas, the author of "The House with Green Shutters," whose real name is G. B. Brown. The latter is not a particularly pleasing or attractive book; it is certainly a novel of outstanding power and merit, the work of one who may do memorable things. The reception of "The House with Green Shutters" is another proof that the new writer who has something to say worth hearing will immediately obtain an audience. The book is already in a third edition.

Another young writer who has come very rapidly to the front lately is Mr. Gilbert Chesterton, who has just been asked to write a Life of Browning for Messrs. Macmillan's Series edited by Mr. John Morley. Considering that Mr. Chesterton is still under thirty, such a commission is a remarkable honour.

It is said that the next enterprise of the firm which has made such a success of selling volumes by instalment is to be a large and magnificently illustrated Bible, which will be advertised in connection with one of the leading London dailies.

BOOKS AND JOTTINGS OF THE MONTH.

BY AN EXPERT OF "THE ROW."

THE year which is now drawing to a close cannot from either a literary or a bookseller's point of view be considered a satisfactory one. The War in South Africa has undoubtedly greatly influenced publishers in keeping back the issue of works of an expensive or important character, and the nation's bereavement has cast a dark shadow over the business of the year. This overshadowing gloom has disposed readers to books of a light and ephemeral character rather than to works of a more serious nature, with the result that fiction is the only department in literature in which there has been distinct successes. The year will probably be remembered as one of fiction, the sixpenny novel, and of small books. Of the latter, publishers have been vying with each other in the production of choice and dainty editions not only of new books, but of the works of our classic authors and standard novelists. Amongst the latter there have been issued on India-paper the works of Scott, Dickens, George Meredith, Thackeray, George Eliot, and Charles Reade, but these dilettante productions, although delightful for the pocket, cannot possibly take the place of works intended for the library shelves.

One of the most important books of the month is "Japan," by Mortimer Menpes (A. and C. Black), which, as the work of an impressionist artist, cannot fail to attract attention. The author does not take the ordinary traveller's conventional view of this most interesting country, but depicts the varied life of Japan with the enthusiasm of an artist. The chapters on Children, the Geisha, the Gardens of Japan, Flower Arrangement, and Painters and their Methods, are the production of one who has felt the warmth and glow of colour and experienced the charm of the quaint form and beauty of this land of flowers and artists. The book contains one hundred coloured illustrations by the author and is certainly one of the most pleasing gift-books of the season. "Before I Forget," by Albert Chevalier (T. Fisher Unwin), consists of autobiographical records of a varied and interesting life. Mr. Chevalier never appears to be happy unless he is travelling from town to town by day and appearing in some of his well-known characters in the evening. With music and the drama he has always been closely associated; in the early part of his career he appeared in "Little Lord Fauntleroy" and "Our Flat," but eventually found his right avocation as a general entertainer. Although the book is slightly written, it is full of interest, and the large number of character-portraits which the volume contains greatly adds to its value. It is a fascinating record of a successful artist and born entertainer. In issuing a new edition of "The Riviera," by the Rev. Hugh Macmillan (H. Virtue and Co.), the publishers have taken the opportunity to enlarge and improve this valuable guide to the Sunny South, not only in its descriptive matter, but by adding to the number of the illustrations. The book now forms a valuable handbook to this fashionable region and also to the many beautiful excursions which may be made in that highly favoured district.

In fiction, "Comments of a Countess" (Duckworth and Co.) will be found refreshingly original. The author, who, rumour suggests, is a lady well known in Society, is evidently well informed upon the subject she has written about, and does not hesitate to express her opinion upon the men and women by whom she is surrounded in an incisive and trenchant style. Here is a specimen: "The one thing Society will not stand is dullness. You may be virtuous or you may be the reverse, but you must not bore people. . . . The pretty woman still exists, but she finds it more paying to bestow her smiles on City men and worm secrets from financiers." As a comment on Society, it will fascinate and please its readers. There has been much good fiction issued this season, and amongst the best is "The Velvet Glove," by H. S. Merriman (Smith, Elder, and Co.); it is a novel of Jesuit intrigue frustrated by careful and judicious diplomacy. In "The First Men in the Moon," by H. G. Wells (G. Newnes, Limited), the author returns to the subject by which he obtained his principal success. The book is of a semi-scientific character, and the illustrations are eccentric and grotesque and will greatly help the reader to soar with the author through space to the region of the moon and to see the people inhabiting this marvellous country. Charming written, with a careful consideration of historical facts, is "Sons of the Sword," by Margaret L. Woods (W. Heinemann). Spain and the Peninsular War, with Napoleon as one of the leading characters, form the groundwork of Mrs. Woods' story, and, like all her books, it is well written and full of movement and dramatic interest.

MUSICAL AND THEATRICAL GOSSIP.

"BLUE-BELL IN FAIRYLAND."

BLUE-BELL really is in pantomime-land, and not a bit the worse for that, since the "little London flower-girl" would be irresistible anywhere when presented by Miss Ellaline Terriss, particularly if, as now, she were supported by her talented husband, Mr. Seymour Hicks. The new Vaudeville piece is primarily intended for the little ones, and so relies less upon plot and logical development than upon incident and clever performance, and the Management, recognising this, has got together some very talented people. The principals already named are hosts in themselves: the one as the quintessence of youthful grace and charm, and the other as fertile actor, mimic, dancer, and singer, always energetic, always ingenious. Into the bargain comes Miss Margaret Fraser, rich in grace and yet still waiting for her kingdom—that is to say, her opportunity—and Miss Florence Lloyd, who can fascinate you as boy or as girl—or fairy as well. Moreover, there are plenty of pretty girls in and out of and just coming to their teens who seem to find their work a labour of love. Mr. Murray King and Mr. Sidney Harcourt are comical in each Act, first as two quaint

the original cast are again in the bill—Mr. J. L. Shine, the Spoofah Bey, and Mr. Charles Danby, the Squire Higgins—and they work with praiseworthy energy undisturbed by any craving for subtlety. Miss Kitty Loftus is in the new Company, and her vivacity, her clever dancing and singing, meet with hearty applause. Miss Ethel Clinton, from Terry's, Miss Minna Blakiston, and Miss Aylward render service of value. Mr. Fred Storey replaces Mr. George Grossmith junior successfully, and Mr. Joseph Wilson and Mr. Frank Barclay do their share towards rendering "Morocco Bound" a capital entertainment.

MISS JULIA FRANKS,

who is to play Fatima in Drury Lane's "Blue Beard" pantomime this year, hails from Melbourne, though her father and mother are of German and English nationality respectively. Her first professional engagement was with Messrs. Williamson and Musgrove, under whose management she appeared as Fraisetta in "The Old Guard," in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, and Tasmania. She came to this country in order to continue her musical studies, and was a pupil of Mr. Randegger's at the Royal Academy of Music for some five years. About three years ago she achieved considerable success with the National Opera Company, notably in the part of Hänsel in Humperdinck's



MR. J. L. SHINE AS SPOOFAH BEY (HIS ORIGINAL PART),

IN THE REVIVAL OF "MOROCCO BOUND" AT THE COMEDY THEATRE.

From Photographs by W. and D. Downey, Ebury Street, S.W.

MR. CHARLES DANBY AS SQUIRE HIGGINS (HIS ORIGINAL PART),

footmen, and afterwards as a couple of schoolboys. Master George Hersee (Peter, the cat) once more shows that his talent is remarkable, and he is by no means the only gentleman styled "Master" who exhibits a talent for the stage. It is not an easy task to give a glimpse of fairydom in any playhouse or to invent a new fairy-story, but Mr. Seymour Hicks, author of the book, Mr. Walter Slaughter, the composer, and Mr. Aubrey Hopwood, who has written the lyrics, have contrived a pretty, mirthful entertainment well calculated to please all the little ones and a great many of the big as well.

"MOROCCO BOUND."

After all, it is not a very long time since the 13th April, 1893, which saw the birth of what has been called the first of the musical comedies. Perhaps "Miss Decima" and "In Town," which came earlier, have claims to be regarded as of the same class, but this is doubtful. The revival of "Morocco Bound," at the Comedy, which piece had Mr. Arthur Branscombe as author, Mr. Adrian Ross as author of the lyrics, and music from the fertile pen of Dr. Osmond Carr, shows that there has been no great development in this class of work. "Weak dialogue, clever lyrics, poor plot, and ingenious music," might serve as description of most of them, and it applies correctly to "Morocco Bound," which, nevertheless, had and is likely to have a good run, for, if the scheme is lacking in inventive power, it serves in the second Act as a capital framework for a variety entertainment. Two members of

"Hänsel and Gretel" at Dublin. Later on, Miss Franks joined the Carl Rosa Opera Company to play the name-part in "Carmen," but, being averse to touring, she relinquished this engagement after a time, and has since refused many tempting offers simply because they have involved going round the provinces. Miss Franks has appeared at all the principal concert-halls in London, and was one of the soloists at the last Norwich Festival and Messrs. Boosey's London Ballad Concerts at Queen's Hall last season. In March last she played the chief character in Mr. Edward German's opera, "The Rival Poets," at St. George's Hall, and one of her most prized possessions is the "unsolicited testimonial," as she naïvely terms it, and congratulatory letter which she received from the composer on the following day. Miss Franks is delighted at her engagement by Mr. Arthur Collins and is looking forward with the most expectant eagerness to her first appearance in pantomime. She is fully alive to the fact that, this being her first really big London engagement, a great deal depends on it as far as her future is concerned. I do not think she will be disappointed at the result.

MISS JULIE MACKAY.

There is something peculiarly appropriate about Miss Julie Mackay's engagement as "principal boy" in this year's pantomime of "The Sleeping Beauty," at the Royal Opera House, Belfast, because she is herself an Irish-American and claims cousinship with the famous

Barry Sullivan. Miss Mackay was born in New York in 1871, and made her stage debut as Buttercup in "H.M.S. Pinafore" in 1885. She afterwards toured through the United States in a round of Shaksperian plays, appearing as Rosalind close on a



MISS ALICE POWELL, WHO IS PLAYING MADGE SCARABEE IN "SHEERLUCK JONES," AT TERRY'S THEATRE.

Photo by the London Stereoscopic Company, Regent Street, W.

thousand times. Six years ago, Miss Mackay came to England and created something of a sensation at the London Empire with her strangely deep but wonderfully sympathetic contralto voice. Since then she has become one of the popular celebrities of the London and provincial music-halls, and has scored successes in pantomime at Brixton, Stoke Newington, Liverpool, and Leeds. About six months before the present Boer War started, she paid a professional visit to South Africa, and was asked to Pretoria to sing before ex-President Kruger and the late Mrs. Kruger. They were good enough to compliment her after the performance and even invited her to partake of some of the celebrated "Kruger" coffee.

HORS D'ŒUVRES.

Christmas as a Commercial Speculation—Three-Volume Christmas-Cards.

A STRANGER from Mars, unacquainted with the climate of Europe, might readily identify the approach of Christmas by the painful obsequiousness of ticket-collectors, barbers, postmen, and waiters becoming strained and domineering as the actual twenty-fifth approaches. So much so that the mean man, accustomed to use the "Twopenny Tube" in the morning, now changes temporarily to the 'bus, and the habitu  of the Underground transfers his custom to the "Tube." By doing this they waste hours a day (to avoid giving a shilling tip), and not till about the middle of January can they return to their usual route with a laboured affectation, to "save face," of having been dangerously ill and therefore unable to go to the City.

Of late, it has been insinuated that Christmas is a festival artificially fomented by Charles Dickens, as if he had designs of bringing off a financial *coup* with a double Christmas Number of *Household Words* (with a coloured frontispiece of coughing "waits" or something cheery and sensational of the kind). Or did he want to foist upon the public a mass of Christmas "copy"—rejected by the newspapers or otherwise—to open up a new line of business untapped by the trade and engineer a "corner" in it? No, there was lying dormant in the British nation a love for a season when young men and maidens might accumulate in a family *r union* round the ancestral table, join together in crisp, Christmas-like music in the parish church, exchange small tokens of mutual affection—which, after all, does exist in families, say what one will—and indulge in a rational enjoyment of viands and refreshments. Dickens only crystallised it.

There is an extraordinary amount of fashion in Christmas-cards. The single card, for the present, is "dead," and anything is *de rigueur* from the two-leaved variety up to the voluminous and complicated work fully illustrated on every page—a sort of miniature Golden Treasury of Poetry or concentrated Hundred Best Books. It affords half-an-hour's solid reading and would really require a preface and a large index. It often costs more than a novel. There is a decline in the khaki cards representing cannon blowing troops into atoms (motto, "Peace and Goodwill towards Men") and bayoneted Boers writhing on the ground, with an explanatory note of "Wishing You a Happy Christmas." Artists have returned to the scenes of intense human misery usually selected for the modern Christmas-card—minstrels developing pneumonia in a sleet, iron-bound snow-balls melting down the napes of old gentlemen's necks, and villages coated with unswept slush to a degree justifying the instant dismissal of the local municipal authorities.

Immense expense in every direction is the feature of the present Christmas. The motor-car has taken the place of the usual half-crown blotting-pad as a gift, and the tin-gilt cigarette-case is superseded by the offer of six months' house-rent in Park Lane. The reason is stated to be the practical spirit of the age—the same which prompts the economical parent of the middle classes to give his child a Yuletide gift of a suit of clothes or a visit to the doctor. The Hope blue diamond and two others of the greatest "stones" in the world have been chosen by American plutocrats as Christmas-boxes. Those wishing to be "in the movement" should present a friend with a season's yachting-trip in the Mediterranean or payment of all dressmakers' bills for the Coronation—as slight tokens of seasonable kind feeling.

Another feature of the moment is the increased manufacture at home instead of on the Continent of cards, dolls, painted animals, and other indigestible articles consumed by young children. The courageous experiment bravely faces the fact that it is so much cheaper to forward plans to Germany, have them carried out by Germans under a German manager, and then shipped back to England at half the cost and in half the time it would have taken them to be sent from the East-End factory to the Lowther Arcade. However, more efficient telephone communication on reduced terms is sure to be soon set up between the East and West of London by laying the wires *via* Berlin; then, by having the electrical side of the undertaking done by an American Trust, we could get rid of the present "alternate" system—the system under which the telephone works one day and does not work the next.—HILL ROWAN.

Miss Lily Brayton.

Mr. Courtice Pounds.

Mr. Lionel Brough.



Mr. Gerald Lawrence.

Mr. Tree.

A MEMENTO OF MR. DEERBOHM TREE AND COMPANY'S LATEST TOUR: MR. TREE'S TREAT TO THE DARGLE, NEAR BRAY.

THE MAN ON THE WHEEL.

Cyclists and Christmas-Cards—The Man who Designs Them—Horse-Collar Humour—A Suggestion—Riding in the Rain—A Club for the Midlands.

Time to light up: Christmas Day, 4.52; Thursday, 4.53; Friday, 4.55; Saturday, 4.55; Sunday, 4.57; Monday, 4.58; Tuesday, 4.59.

Hail to the courageous man who in this fine old seasonable, sloppy, slushy, snowy Christmastide goes roaming awheel! I've just been looking at a scrap-book where are pasted the more whimsical of Christmas-cards received last year. Many are cycling in topic. Happily, in looking at them I can hold my sides and laugh. Yet, if I could find the man who designed Christmas-cards with a cycling flavour I would have no compunction about tomahawking him. My heart would be callous to the pleading of his wife, and the wailing of his children would give savour to my glee. Crack would go what John Chinaman calls his "savvy-box," and the woes of cyclists as depicted on Christmas-cards would be depicted nevermore.

It is quite clear to my mind that the gentlemen who design these Christmas-cards are all first-cousins, all dyspeptic, morose old fogeys who have muddled the calendar and imagine Christmas a sort of Valentine's Day. Some of us, of course, are enthusiastic in wheeling. We cycle in blazing summer and perspire till we almost dribble away. We splash

I want to see some cards in which the real side of winter wheeling is represented—a blithe, bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked girl coasting down a hill dusted with snow; a party of young folks laughingly coming home with bunches of evergreen decorations piled over the handle-bars; a young fellow, all vigour and manliness, out for a jaunt through lanes where the trees' limbs are like fairy bowers of white. Of course, such cards would not be so funny, but they would be far more like the genuine thing.

Now, honestly, I don't think we Britishers, with all our boasting about hardiness and being always ready to face any weather, are quite such enthusiastic cyclists in winter-time as we ought to be. When the day is muggy and there is a little bit of grease on the streets and it is likely our wheels will get very dirty, don't we shirk winter riding? I have sung the praises on this page before of riding when there is a little snow on the ground. It is an enjoyable sensation. But have you ever enjoyed a day's riding in the rain? I want to save myself from the accusation of being a crank, and so I'm not going to say a word in favour of slush. Yet, wretched as roads often are near towns, they are frequently excellent some distance out. Of course, there are long stretches of mud, but it is quite exceptional when you cannot find a little strip of clean track on one side.

The provinces often set the fashion to London. When it is too late, the "C.T.C." will make a frantic effort to check its waning popularity by suggesting a Club-house in London for the cyclists of all England, with a good subscription for London members and a light one for



HUNTING THE FOX IN ITALY: A BICYCLE MEET ON THE CAMPAGNA.

From a Photograph supplied by the Press Picture Agency

through rain and mire, wheel across snow and crunching ice in winter, come home with frozen limbs and wet feet, and declare with vehemence that we like it. Our relatives listen to us with unbelieving smiles, and our friends—in this time of goodwill to all men—send us Christmas-cards they think to be funny. You know those cards—the poor wretch, dejected and purple-nosed, trundling his mud-swathed bike through slushing sleet, with a shadowgraph on a window of an adjoining house of folks keeping Christmas right merrily; the poor wretch out in the snow who receives half-a-dozen punctures from a picturesque piece of holly on the roadside, and who is standing wrathfully tearing his hair and indulging in anything but "Peace-on-earth" expressions; also the poor wretch who, owing to the depth of snow, has to carry his bicycle, presenting a forlorn spectacle. Beneath each of these pictures you will generally find the stereotyped phrase, "A Merry Christmas!"

Of course, all this is intended to be sarcasm. Such cards may even be regarded as really funny. The fun, however, is of the fine old English horse-collar brand of humour, wherein a drunken man lying in the gutter thinking he is in bed, or a horseman pitched neck-and-crop into the middle of a ditch, is hailed as screamingly merry. Perhaps, being one of those men from the North of the Tweed who require a surgical operation to get an English joke into what we call our brains, I don't see any merriment in the depicting of personal discomfort. If we get pleasure from thinking about somebody else's misfortunes, there is, however, something to be said in favour of these cards. All cyclists get some cards with their favourite pastime depicted in unpleasing aspect, and obtain some satisfaction from the knowledge that they are extravagant caricatures.

provincial members. One reason we have difficulty in getting reforms is because we have now no representative Club. A great Club in London that wouldn't snub the smaller Clubs but become affiliated with them would have had a mighty power. For years I have pictured in my mind a Club-house under the management, say, of the "C.T.C.," with every Club throughout the country affiliated, with a really good wheelman's library, the best maps that could be obtained, lantern-lectures on pleasing tours, opportunities for manufacturers to show their latest inventions—in a word, a centre of cycling interest. That vision, however, will never be a reality till the "C.T.C." gets the rust out of its joints or until some other Club rises in power. Meanwhile, a movement is on foot to have in Birmingham a Club-house for Midland cyclists. I wish it every success.

J. F. F.

A BICYCLE MEET ON THE CAMPAGNA.

Of late years fox-hunting has become quite one of the diversions of the up-to-date Roman noble and his dark-eyed wife and daughter. Accordingly, on stated days the Eternal City sees a brilliant cavalcade of horsemen and horsewomen winding down its picturesque thoroughfares, and, once the Campagna is reached, sport begins in good earnest, the hunt being followed by crowds on foot, and also by cyclists, although it need hardly be said that their presence is not particularly encouraged by the genial Master and his satellites. The Italian cyclist wishes above all things to save himself trouble; therefore he is never so well pleased as when he can strike a railway line, and, as Italian trains travel only too slowly, there is very little danger of being run down, for there is usually plenty of time to get out of the way.

THE WORLD OF SPORT.

RACING NOTES.

Coronation Year. Racing officials are setting their houses in order with a view to scooping in the dollars during the Coronation year. As I have before stated, alterations are to be made in the Stands at Ascot, Newmarket, and Epsom for the accommodation of His Majesty the King and his suite. I expect we shall be honoured by the presence of the King at Sandown, Kempton, and Goodwood, not to mention some of the minor meetings. When the Prince of Wales attended one of the home meetings, it made a difference of £700 or £800 per day in the takings, and it is pretty safe to predict that the presence of His Majesty the King at a meeting will mean at least £1000 per day added to the Ring and Stand takings. The railway companies will, too, benefit to the tune of some thousands per year by the presence of Royalty at the meetings, and it is to be hoped that the Traffic Managers will see that the public get something like value for money. There has been very little to complain of in the management of the race traffic over the Southern lines of late years. The fact of the matter is, those in authority have come to the conclusion that there is money in racecourse traffic, and they have acted accordingly. All the same, I think the cheap trips worked so successfully by the Northern lines might be made to pay on the South Coast, as it is hard on the small man who goes racing to be called upon to pay sixty per cent. above the usual railway-fares.

It is difficult, unless one follows the money, to find winners at the winter game, and yet in the old days stay-at-home backers did well in the winter. Often, of late, horses have started favourites that on the book had little or no chance of winning, and, what is more, they generally arrived first past the post. Seemingly, the triers in the races were few, and it may be that owners put their heads together and go for one animal only. Anyway, the peculiar betting requires some explaining. I, for one, should be only too glad to run horses under National Hunt Rules if I could, without betting, have a reasonable amount of success with them; but I contend—and I have tried it—that a non-betting owner could not hope to make selling platers pay under National Hunt Rules. Jumpers beat each other too often at the game for the man of judgment, but the question arises, Is it the horses or the jockeys that are to blame? We know that good touts find the bookmakers their best paymasters. Perhaps some of the jockeys find it pays better to ride to the order of the bookmakers than it does to obey the instructions of the owners. I envy those gentlemen who are able to train and ride their own horses. They get all the sport and the profit too, while they miss the worries attaching to an owner who has to pay out all round.

Entries. The entries for the Spring Handicaps will be published on the second Thursday in the new year, which will fall on Jan. 9. Many of the old horses have been in steady galloping work throughout the winter months, and there should be no lack of runners during the early stages of the flat-race season of 1902. It can be taken for granted that the Spring Handicaps will yield well; at the same time, I think it is a thousand pities that the Jockey Club do not allow the City and Suburban, Jubilee, Chester Cup, and Great Metropolitan to remain open at least until the beginning of March. In what little ante-post betting now takes place, the Grand National and Lincoln Handicap are the only events patronised by punters until they have been decided, then a move is made for the City and Suburban. The first two handicaps of the season are the medium of big double-event bets, and, as a rule, backers do well with their playful little doubles, as the winner at Lincoln takes very little finding in a bad year, while favourites invariably do well over the Grand National

course. It would be a feather in the cap of all concerned were His Majesty the King to win the Cross-country Derby once more by the aid of Ambush II., who is reported to be going on the right way in his work.

John Porter. The master of Kingsclere waxed eloquent at the Gimcrack Club Dinner, and he told us a deal that was worth hearing. But I do not think Mr. Porter is entitled to pose as an authority on jockeys' fees and retainers, for the simple reason that he has done little or nothing towards improving jockeys. Tom Jennings, on the other hand, has tutored many apprentices, and seemingly he has found it to be the simplest thing in the world to transform raw lads into good horsemen. Now, it has struck me that what T. Jennings could do for profit, J. Porter and the other leading trainers ought to do for the reputation of their stables. If Kingsclere is one of the finest training-grounds in England for horses, it should be also a useful training-ground for jockeys, and while Mr. Porter is training the two-year-olds he might also tutor his apprentices until they held their own in the saddle against all comers. Further, has it never struck those wealthy owners who spend thousands in the breeding and training of horses that the latter are useless in races unless properly ridden? Then why not devote a little money to the tutoring of apprentices? If I had my way, in the majority of races horses should be ridden by boys attached to the stable. Perhaps the foreign invasion will move even our old-fashioned trainers and owners into doing something for their own apprentices.



MR. BARCLAY, THE NEW MASTER OF THE LANARKSHIRE AND RENFREWSHIRE HUNT.

Photo by Lafayette, London and Dublin.

Officials. I am very glad to hear that many Clerks of Courses have taken to agitating for certain reforms. The Clerks undoubtedly have to pay the piper; then let them by all means call the tune. I have often been tempted to make the following suggestion, but up to now my pluck has failed me. However, here goes! The National Hunt Committee might, at least, when discussing certain questions affecting steeplechasing, call in the aid of the leading Clerks of Courses and consult with them as to the best means to bring about reforms. The members of the

National Hunt Committee are estimable gentlemen, but I doubt their being able to run a racecourse successfully, and we can see that they have failed lamentably in their endeavour to make their sport popular with the public. The Clerks of the Course could tell them in once what to do and what not to do, and I maintain that the time has come to give the Clerks a show in the deliberations of the Committee. The successful section of the sporting world should be strenuously followed.

CAPTAIN COE.

MR. BARCLAY.

Mr. Barclay, who succeeds Colonel Robertson Aikman as Master of the Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire Foxhounds, becomes one of the ten Masters of Foxhounds in Scotland. Fox-hunting does not flourish north of the Tweed; the country does not favour it, and farmers commit vulpicide with impunity. The Lanarkshire country, once famous for its hare-hunting, is almost left alone to-day, and the Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire pack hunts, for the most part, in the latter county. Even then it is not the best land in the world to hunt over—stone dykes, plough-land, and wood are too common—but the devotion of sportsmen has made up for the shortcomings of the country, and the Hunt has existed there for more than a century. Sir David Buchanan, who was Master down to 1893, held his position for more than forty years; and Colonel Aikman, who took over the pack in 1896, had previously been Master of the Lanarkshire Harriers. The Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire is a subscription pack, and can be joined best from Glasgow or Paisley, Kilmarnock or Ardrossan. From the two towns last named the Eglington pack can be met.

OUR LADIES' PAGE.

CHRISTMAS CHIMES are once again in the air; Christmas greetings echoed from one friend to another; Christmas junketings in the family; Christmas memories for the solitary—sadder now than at all other times; Christmas loneliness, despair, and misery for the bereft, the weary, the hungry—whose sorrows' crown of sorrow is reached on the Day when all mankind is bidden to rejoice, whose death in life lies in remembering "the days that are no more." Perhaps, if we who "go softly" could more vividly remember this reverse side of the picture, we might each in our little way help to heal, in the spirit of this great Festival, a little of the misery which circumstances or self have helped to bring down on the heads of the poor, the friendless, and the sorrowful at Christmas.

It is the fashion nowadays, too, in view of family gatherings, poor relations, and other oppressive domestic incidents—which are separately regarded as acclimatised plagues of Egypt—to decry the whole business of Christmas and pooh-pooh its sacredness and signification. This is indeed a pity, more especially where children are involved. There was a time, and a very good time it was, too, when we ourselves were only knee-high, and about those years remembrances still cluster of unspeakable delights—of holly-berry and mistletoe and Christmas chimes—the simple rosary of merry-makings whose echoes still linger in the cobwebbed corridors of memory. Is it quite fair, then, one asks, to rob even the superior and more highly finished modern infant of these few remnants of pure pleasure and innocent belief which a

the scientific gibes and jeers of the later-day scoffer of whom we now hear so much. Notwithstanding also the languid objections of the chronically bored—another portentous section, who find it vulgar to rejoice and bad style to believe—the modern kill-joys of conventionality, there is, after all, as someone sagely remarked somewhere, a



[Copyright.]

A PRETTY DRESS OF CRÊPE-DE-CHINE WITH LACE AND ROSES.



[Copyright.]

DINNER-GOWN OF PINK CRÊPE-DE-CHINE AND IVORY GUIPURE LACE.

great deal of human nature in the world, and some small sacrifice of self, some quiet act of kindness to one less fortunate than ourselves, will add more to the glow at our own hearts on this day of many memories than all that the Credo of Self and Scepticism ever bequeaths to its sorry disciples. And so, having quite unconsciously strayed into a sermonette, let me complete this unfamiliar situation with the time-worn but still youthful, the "ever ancient but always new," salutation of "A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" to my readers at home and away.

SYBIL.

Messrs. Bewlay and Co. have despatched fifty thousand cigars to the British troops in South Africa as a New Year's gift.

The very pretty portrait of Miss Ellaline Terriss as "Blue-Bell" that appeared on the first page of last week's *Sketch* was from a photograph by W. P. Dando of the original drawing for the character by Mr. Wilhelm.

Miss Charlotte Granville, who is now playing the rôle of Madge Larrabee in "Sherlock Holmes," at the Lyceum Theatre, was very sorry to be compelled to refuse Mr. Alexander's offer to create Lucrezia in his production of "Paolo and Francesca," but, owing to the immense success of Messrs. Conan Doyle and William Gillette's play, their London season has been extended, and her services will be required therefore for a much longer period.

questioning and materialistic generation has left him? I think not, and still hope with the delightful and cheery-hearted Dickens that Christmas and its beautiful message of Peace and Goodwill may still remain to cheer this poor, weary, and unwise old world with its unworldly lesson of charity and forbearance and belief, notwithstanding

A FREE-LANCE IN THE NEAR EAST *

MR. EDWARD VIZETELLY, the author of this entertaining volume of *Reminiscences*, was taking a rest at Athens after dabbling in an abortive insurrection against the Turks up in the Othrys Mountains, when news reached him of the British occupation of Cyprus. Promptly buckling his portmanteau, he set out for that



PRINCESS NAZLI, CONSIDERED BY MANY TO BE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL IN THE NEAR EAST.

Reproduced from Mr. Edward Vizetelly's *New Book*.

ancient classic isle with a commission in his pocket to contribute letters to the *Glasgow Herald*.

All sorts of people had flocked to the island from various parts in search of wealth, but they found only bitter disappointment. The dazzling stories current at the time proved myths. There were no gold, no diamond-mines, no coal-fields awaiting only pick and shovel to reveal their riches; no precious stones to sweep up in the groves of Paphos, and neither "large pieces of gold," nor even small ones, were washed down by the mountain torrents, as had been stated. Three parts of the island turned out to be an arid waste where nothing would grow, and in the fourth the crops usually failed. Moreover, the inhabitants were as poor as church-mice. There being little or no business to do and no work to be obtained, the new-comers made merry so long as their cash lasted, and, altogether, had a very good time, which the author describes as "a bean-feast over the water." When there was no more money, they took the steamer home.

Mr. Edward Vizetelly remained in the island for three years, acting at different times as Town Clerk at Larnaca, private secretary to the Health Officer and Mayor, clerk to the District Commissioner, clerk to the Larnaca division of the High Court of Justice, and finally as Editor and proprietor of the *Cyprus Times* and schoolmaster, so that he had a varied experience and is able to speak of Cyprus and the Cypriots with authority. The latter, it appears, make but scanty use of water externally, although they take a good deal inwardly, while soap is regarded in the light of a luxury. When one lady who let out furnished rooms found that Englishmen had a tub every morning, she was so struck with amazement that she blurted out to a friend, "How dirty these English people must be—they're always washing themselves!"

In the early part of 1882, the author went over to Egypt, where he

resided several years, engaged in journalism. He passed a thrilling time in Alexandria during the bombardment and fire, and at Cairo during the cholera. He was present at the landing at Port Said and at the fighting on the fresh-water canal. Turning to more peaceful moments, he has something to tell us about up-to-date Egyptian Princesses. The most remarkable of these exalted ladies is Princess Nazli, whose portrait is given here, and who was considered the most beautiful woman in the Near East. She lives in European style, receiving ladies and gentlemen alike, contrary to Mohammedan custom. In her youth at Constantinople, she spanked along on horseback, in short habit and top-hat, followed by an English groom. Now, she is driven in a brougham-and-pair by an English coachman, with a small English lad attired as what used to be known as a "tiger" beside him. The Princess delights to be "in the movement."

It was on leaving Egypt that Mr. Edward Vizetelly was sent by the *New York Herald* to East Africa, where he succeeded in intercepting Sir Henry Stanley and Emin Pasha on their way down to the coast. Before setting out on this important errand, he made a trip to Beyrout as Mr. Bennett's guest on board his yacht the *Namouna*. One morning, after a rather frolicsome night, the valet of that gentleman approached the author, and, with some hesitation, remarked, "I beg your pardon, sir, but, if you stay on this yacht much longer, you'll kill Mr. Bennett, and we don't want to lose him, you know."

This interesting volume of five hundred pages, illustrated with numerous beautiful plates and most handsomely bound, is full of incident and sparkling with capital stories. It also comprises a good supply of hitherto unwritten history by an eye-witness, which may come in handy when regenerated Egypt under British guidance finds a historian—Q. T.

A LITERARY DUCHESS.

THE DUCHESS OF LEEDS, who, together with her infant son and heir, spent some time recently on the Italian Riviera, is one of the most literary wearers of the strawberry-leaves, and a little time ago she performed a ceremony which should delight those good people who like the novels written by the "Wizard of the North" better than those produced by members of the modern Kailyard school. Her Grace planted a young oak-tree on the site of the old trysting-oak described by Scott in "Ivanhoe." Till recently, that oak was one of the glories of Harthill Walk, near Worksop, but lately it was taken down, though the trunk is carefully preserved by the Duke of Leeds' agent, Mr. Mozey.



THE DUCHESS OF LEEDS.

Photo by Kate Pragnell, Brompton Square, S.W.

The Duchess of Leeds, who is, it will be remembered, one of the sisters of gallant Captain Hedworth Lambton, published, not very long ago, a volume of short stories, entitled "Capriccios," and it is said that the elder of her four daughters will follow in her talented mother's footsteps.

* "From Cyprus to Zanzibar by the Egyptian Delta: The Adventures of a Journalist in the Isle of Love, the Home of Miracles, and the Land of Cloves." By Edward Vizetelly ("Bertie Clere"), War Correspondent, Author of the "Reminiscences of a Bashi-Bazouk," &c. Illustrated with many Photographs by L. Floillo, of Alexandria, and others. London: C. Arthur Pearson, Limited.

CITY NOTES.

The Next Settlement begins on December 27.

THE STOCK EXCHANGE CHRISTMAS.

LAST year, the Stock Exchange entered upon its Christmas festivities beneath a cloud of ill-defined and vague apprehension. The final Settlement of the year, all House-men knew, would be one of anxious difficulty, if not of severe trouble, although there were few who anticipated the crushing blow which was to fall in consequence of the London and Globe collapse a day or two after the Christmas holidays. Still, there was an ominous rumbling of rumour, and the festive fare was more indigestible than ever, pale anxiety proving a poor condiment. But this Christmas is being observed in quite another vein. Beaming the brokers and jobbers connected with the Kaffir Circus, hopeful the Home Railway brigade, satisfied the Yankee crowd, while those whose paths lie Junglewads are cheered by the very pronounced improvement that has overtaken the West African Market. The restaurateurs of Throgmorton Street and the immediate vicinity are drawing largely upon their stores of champagne—the typical Stock Exchange exhilarator when things are glad some. The cheery advance in Consols is taken as a sign that the hardening Money Market may be practically ignored as a Stock Exchange factor, and even Westralians show some signs of awakening out of their long slumber, now that the Augean stable stands some chance of cleaner treatment under new Lake View and Ivanhoe auspices. Needless to remark, the happier House makes for happier investors, and it is no empty form accompanied with semi-misgiving when we say that we cordially wish our many friends at home and abroad “A Merry Christmas.”

THE HOME RAILWAY MARKET.

At this season of the year it is not wholly inappropriate to devote some little consideration to the homeliest of all markets, and one which perhaps appeals to a larger circle than any other—the Home Railway. Last week we were pointing out that an exchange from the Ordinary descriptions into the more gilt-edged issues has many advantages, in view of the poor return now to be derived from so many of the first-named class. In pursuing the subject, one is naturally led to inquire what prospects can be formed of the dividend declarations shortly to be made for the final half of the current year. Before going into details, it must be fully understood that the fascinating plan of estimating dividends is one that is subject to all kinds of vagaries. A prophet has so many things against him that his forecasts are exceedingly difficult to form in the first place. Again, Railway Boards are conservative in one half-year and liberal the next. We remember that on one occasion, when the Stock Exchange estimate of the London and North-Western dividend was 8 per cent., and the actual declaration was made of 8½ per cent., a special messenger was immediately despatched by the House to Euston in order to find out whether the Company's figures were correct! Nevertheless, it is of all things the most interesting to inquire, upon the slender basis that we have, the likelihood of what dividend will be paid on Home Railway stocks within the next month or two.

“BRUMS.”

To take what is popularly called the premier line first, the London and North-Western Company had lost £38,896 up to the week ending Dec. 18, as compared with the corresponding period last year. With the exception of the North-Eastern, this is the most disappointing showing in the list of British Railways: but, in spite of the poor figures, there is every chance that the last year's rate of 6½ per cent. will be maintained. The under-publication of traffics will probably show that the decrease, if not turned into a gain, is virtually wiped out. The coal-bill ought to come down by some £150,000, although labour and material will probably run away with about a third of that. The Company has been peddling out more Ordinary stock, and there are also other charges to be met; but some optimistic souls are talking of a dividend at the rate of 6¾ per cent. per annum. We are content with the lower estimate, and, if it should

prove correct, it will make the dividend for the year work out at 5½ per cent. At the present price, and allowing for accrued interest, the yield on “Brums” on our basis is £3 7s. per cent. to the investor.

“BERWICKS.”

At one time this year, North-Eastern Consols, familiarly known as “Berwicks” in the Stock Exchange, touched 149½, the lowest price recorded for fourteen years. Since then the price has recovered to 155, more on account of the enterprising policy of the Directors than through good traffic-results. The North-Eastern Manager, Mr. Gibb, has lately returned from the United States, where he has been studying the railway methods of the Yankees, and his return home is signalled by improvements as regards traffic-publication, more scientific train-loads, and so forth. With regard to the former, the North-Eastern Company has been unlucky in its receipts, owing to a variety of well-known causes. Its published figures show that a decline of nearly £60,000, as compared with the 1900 statistics, has taken place. It cannot be hoped that more than half of this heavy balance is “over-published,” and, seeing that a good slice of new capital is now ranking for dividend, we fear that stockholders must face a reduction of ½ or ¼ per cent., which would make the final distribution at the rate of 6½ or 6¾ per cent. per annum. With the 2¼ per cent. paid last July, the former rate would give 5½ per cent. for the whole year, and still “Berwicks” would pay a present buyer just over 3½ per cent. on his investment.

MIDLAND PROSPECTS.

The Midland Company has behaved splendidly to its stockholders during the last few weeks. From a heavy traffic decrease, the figures have been converted into an increase of £12,216, which may readily rise to £20,000 prior to the year's end, and will probably stand nearer £40,000 when the actual figures are published. But the great goods-carrying line cannot hope to save as much out of its coal-bill as the North-Western has probably done, and larger capital charges must run away with some £30,000, while the lower balance of ten thousand pounds at the end of the first half-year has also to be made good. The Company, all things considered, should have at least £60,000 extra to play with, and, as it takes about £47,000 to pay an additional ½ per cent. on the Deferred stock, the Directors are likely to consider the step justified. This would give the Deferred 1½ per cent. for the six months, making 2½ per cent. for the year, and, at the current quotation, the return works out to nearly £3 10s. per cent.

GREAT WESTERN.

A published increase of £102,690 by the Great Western Company is far and away the best result achieved by any of the Home Railways. What with its saving on coal and economies in other directions, the Board should find themselves quite £200,000 to the good for the half-year. The Company's capital requirements being fairly large, it may be found advisable to make as good a showing as possible, and a surprise is possibly in store for the market, as it usually is, over the “Western” dividend. A year ago, the rate was 5¾ per cent., and we are inclined to estimate that next month the figures will be good enough to ensure an advance of one or perhaps one and a-quarter per cent. more. If the latter, then Great Western Ordinary must be considered worth buying, for the return to a buyer will be 3½ per cent., and next year's saving in coal should prove larger than that of 1901. The Company paid 7 per cent. for the last half-year of 1899, but for the final six months of 1900, as we have just mentioned, only 5¾ was declared.

GREAT EASTERN.

Regarded in the light of interest-earning qualities, Great Eastern Ordinary might be called the “Consols” of the Home Railway Market, since the security yields less than almost any other in the same list. The price of the stock is now within a fraction of par, after being 112 at one time this year, and 91½ at another. In 1899, by the way, it touched 138 one sunny August day, but this is its maximum, and for that half-year 5¼ per cent. was declared. For the final half of 1900, the



At the first General Meeting of the Stock Exchange Rifle Club, held recently, the Chairman said he thought that, in the interests of their fellow-members and the general public, they ought to insist on those members who had had no previous experience with the rifle taking lessons at a shooting-range before making their appearance at Bisley.—Are we to expect something like this?

dividend fell to only 4 per cent., but, seeing that the Company publishes an increase of £49,499, proprietors of the Ordinary stock might fairly look for a substantial advance were it not for the fact that in the June half-year a sum of £55,000 had to be taken from the reserve. This being the case, we shall be surprised if the Board pays more than $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., unless it be deemed justifiable, by the payment of another $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., to bring the dividend up to the round three for the year. We lean to the more cautious estimate, which would even then raise the yield on Great Eastern Ordinary to a shade below 3 per cent. But it is quite on the cards that the Board may decide to adopt the heroic policy of rebuilding and increasing the reserve, to the present discomfort of proprietors, although to their ultimate benefit.

THE SOUTHERN LINES.

The London and Brighton Company publishes an increase of rather more than £20,000, thanks to a rise in fares, but it must be remembered that for the June half-year the Company failed to earn the full dividend on its Preferred Ordinary stock. Besides this, there are large new capital requirements to be met, and the saving on coal can hardly be put higher than £50,000. Market estimates range from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 per cent. on Brighton "A," comparing with the $4\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. paid last February. Supposing that $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. should be declared, it will be the lowest distributed since 1885, for which year the dividend was $2\frac{3}{4}$. On South-Eastern Deferred (Dover "A") nothing can be expected, but we should think that the Directors will strain every nerve to keep up the 3 per cent. on the Ordinary stock which is necessary in order to maintain the senior securities in the Trustee list. Mr. Cosmo Bonsor, at the meeting last July, said he hoped that the coal-bill would be about £40,000 less; but, in view of the heavy maintenance outlay and the traffic-decrease of £27,000 in the two Companies' receipts, the outlook is far from pleasant. If the Chatham $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Arbitration Preference receives its full dividend, as we fancy it will, proprietors may deem themselves fortunate. The South-Western's traffics are nearly £5000 down, and a reduction of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. in the Ordinary dividend is not improbable.

"YORKS" AND "LEEDS."

The Great Northern at the June half-year lifted £60,000 from its reserve in order to make up 3 per cent. on its Preferred Ordinary stock, and only by another draft on the same fund can the Original Ordinary hope to get the full 3 per cent. that will keep its prior issues in the charmed list for Trustees. The traffics show a bagatelle of less than five hundred pounds increase, but the Company may save £60,000 over its coal contracts, although this will be largely offset by fresh charges and higher expenses. We should imagine that the Board will take the necessary fifteen or twenty thousand pounds from reserve and maintain the 3 per cent. on the Ordinary, hoping for brighter times. The Lancashire and Yorkshire has fared much better, and, seeing that it will very likely save nearly as much on coal as the Great Northern, while it has a published traffic-increase of £19,631, we should say that the dividend can be readily raised a quarter per cent., if not a half. The former would make a $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. rate, or $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. for the whole year. Considering that the price of the stock has recently fallen to 106 (on the appearance of a new capital issue), the security looks reasonably cheap, paying, as it would on our dividend calculation, about $3\frac{5}{8}$ per cent.

THE ELECTRICAL RAILWAYS.

It can, of course, be taken for granted that the Waterloo and City Ordinary stockholders will receive their regular 3 per cent., and at the current quotation of $92\frac{1}{2}$ the buyer gets about $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on his money. The City and South London Company, having no big London and South-Western to father it, can scarcely hope for more than 2 per cent. at the outside, and this would be an increase of 15s. per cent. as compared with the previous half-year. Last August, $1\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. was paid, so that a further 2 per cent., if declared, would bring up the year's dividend to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., whereas for 1900 the whole of the stockholders received only $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. The line, having got to the Angel, shows no indication of going to the Devil, despite Stock Exchange superstition; in fact, the policy of extension appears at last to be justifying itself. Special interest attaches to the Central London distribution, seeing that the dividend on the Deferred comes, like Christmas, only once a year. If 4 per cent. be not paid on all the Ordinary stocks, which, of course, include the Preferred and Deferred, there will be a good many other people astonished as well as ourselves.

Thursday, Dec. 19, 1901.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All letters on financial subjects only to be addressed to the "City Editor, The Sketch Office, 198, Strand."

Our Correspondence Rules are published on the first Wednesday in each Month.

As we go to press early this week, on account of the Christmas holidays, we must beg the indulgence of our correspondents in leaving over the answers to their letters until next week.

The American members of the Company now playing "Sherlock Holmes" at the Lyceum Theatre have been asked to spend Christmas Day with Dr. Conan Doyle at his lovely home, Hindhead, near Haslemere, in Surrey, and they will leave Victoria Station on the morning of the 25th, returning to town the same evening, as there is to be a special matinée on Boxing Day.

SOME FAMOUS HUNTS: THE QUORN.

NOW that "cubbing" is over and fox-hunting is in full swing, it is interesting to study the good or bad luck of some of the famous Hunts whose records go back for a couple of centuries. Fox-hunting is a pastime so peculiarly British and has had so marked an effect upon the national development and characteristics, that it is surprising to find how little is known of the great Hunts outside the comparatively limited ranks of their followers and admirers. I have heard it stated that every healthy, athletic Briton who can ride is at heart a fox-hunter, and the statement may be true; but, unfortunately, the will to hunt is of little use without the aid of a fair bank-balance, and he who would hunt regularly must spend a very large sum of money, far larger than people imagine who have no practical experience of the sport.

When one starts to write notes of a few big Hunts, the Quorn comes naturally into the first place. Not only is it very old—Mr. Hugo Meynell was Master from 1753-1800, and the district had been hunted before his time—but it has some of the best sporting country in Great Britain, and has been the proud possessor of Masters, huntsmen, and hounds whose glorious achievements will not be forgotten while a fox is left in Great Britain.

As everybody knows, the bulk of the Quorn country is in Leicestershire; it can be hunted best from headquarters in the neighbourhood of Melton Mowbray, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Loughborough, and Leicester. The Quorn has a few coverts in Nottingham and Derby shires, and is surrounded by famous Hunts. On the north, it stretches to the Meynell and Harrington country; on the south, to Mr. Fernie's; on the east, it approaches the country of those famous Hunts, the Belvoir and Cottesmore, and on the south-west it meets the Atherstone. For the most part, the country fulfils the fox-hunter's definition of Paradise—it is "all grass"; but men who hunt without knowledge sometimes meet bad accidents with the Quorn in these days of barbed wire half-concealed. The present Master of the Hunt is Captain Burns-Hartopp, of Dalby Hall, notably one of the hardest and fastest riders of our day. The huntsman is Walter Keyte, whose connection with the Quorn dates from the early 'nineties, when he was second-whip. He maintains the great traditions of his predecessors in handling a country that is some twenty miles from north to south and nearly thirty from west to east. The subscription to the Quorn is a heavy one—I believe the minimum is fifty pounds; but there is hunting four days a-week, and, if the going is behind a good fox, the finest thoroughbred will have his work cut out for him.

Our best riders are our smallest talkers—few great hunting-men can be persuaded to discuss their achievements; but big days in the Quorn country always give rise to considerable discussion and often lead the speakers to recall the historic feats performed by past Masters of the same Hunt, men like Mr. Hugo Meynell, Mr. Assheton Smith, and "Squire" Osbaldeston. Unless the years have magnified the achievements of these great men, we have hardly anybody to compete with them to-day.

Mr. Assheton Smith, who was the Quorn's Master from 1806-1817, succeeded Lord Foley in the Mastership at the early age of thirty. He had founded the Tedworth pack, near his home, and seems to have excelled at many sports. He was a great cricket-player—his name appears in the first Gentlemen and Players match recorded—and the great Duke of Wellington remarked once that Assheton Smith would have made the first cavalry officer in Europe. When he left the Quorn, he hunted in the Burton country, and went thence to Hampshire. He lived to see his eighty-second year of life and his Jubilee year as Master.

"There will be no more corn grown in England after this," said a friend who was discussing the evils of Free Trade. "No matter," replied Assheton Smith; "there will be grass everywhere then." He was a glorious rider; with a reckless courage he combined a perfect seat. "Use a martingale on that horse," said a friend who was mounting him on a very difficult, headstrong animal. "My left hand is my martingale," he replied.

Another hero of the Quorn is the well-known "Squire" Osbaldeston, who was Master of that Hunt from 1817-27, with a period of rest to recover from a bad accident in the field, when Sir Bellingham Graham (jun.) took his place. The "Squire" was a curiously gifted individual. He was an "M.F.H." for thirty-five seasons, and often rode six days a week; he was reckoned the best pigeon-shot in England in days when pigeon-shooting was very popular, a great billiard and cricket player, a keen Parliamentarian, and an authority upon the noble art of self-defence, in which connection he acted as referee in the famous fight between Bendigo and Ben Caunt.

The "Squire" hunted with the Burton and John Muster's (South Notts), and went thence to the Atherstone, Quorn, and Pytchley. He did a little flat-racing, but on the Turf he was under a cloud. Men say he did not run straight, but it is incontestable that he rode to win. His great feats included riding two hundred miles in ten consecutive hours for a wager of a thousand guineas, and when, in a fast run with the hounds, his girths broke, he slipped his saddle and finished the run barebacked. His knowledge of dogs may be best gauged by the price six couples of his hounds fetched at their sale—no less than 1360 guineas.

Many stories could be told of Hugo Meynell, Assheton Smith, and "Squire" Osbaldeston, and not a few of latter-day Masters like Mr. Coupland and Lord Lonsdale, but space forbids. Suffice it that the Quorn country preserves the high reputation it has enjoyed for nearly two hundred years, and that to hunt in it is the ardent desire of many a fine sportsman and straight rider who has never yet enjoyed a run in the Leicestershire country.